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CORRESPONDENCE

Aquinas lives

Cleveland, Ohio

To the Editors: I was somewhat disappointed by the exchange between Chet Raymo and John Honner, S.J., in "Science vs. Religion (I and II)" [September 23, 1994]. As someone who has had the responsibility of operating on the brain for over a quarter of a century, as well as directing a laboratory devoted to neuroscience, I continue to find the basic teachings I received in my religious education to be totally relevant to modern-day scientific thinking. As a matter of fact, it could be argued that the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas is more applicable today than it was in his own time. As for Father Honner's rebuttal, I felt it could have been stronger; in fact, his presentation could have destroyed Mr. Raymo's thesis.

ROBERT J. WHITE, M.D.

The writer is professor of surgery at Case Western Reserve University and director of neurosurgery and the brain research laboratory of the Metrohealth Medical Center in Cleveland.

Raymo out of his field

Dryden, N.Y.

To the Editors: Chet Raymo presses philosophers and theologians to incorporate into their writings the "new man" being unfolded by contemporary science. A fair request, but they'll not get much help from Raymo.

Like many who step outside their disciplines, Raymo tends to muddle the use of unfamiliar terms. For example: "Our minds are electrical circuits firing like the chips of computers." What he's really talking about is the brain. The mind, on the other hand, is an intellectual construct that refers to capacities beyond mere ratiocination: judgment, sympathy, imagination, and the like. Raymo also uses the terms "the self" and "the soul" interchangeably, though they have different referents.

Then there is the matter of consciousness and intelligence. Raymo's model of abstract intelligence is colored by how computers operate: Data are stored in memory and acted upon in a rigidly controlled manner by the central processing unit. From that incredibly narrow viewpoint, machines do have some "intelligence," although they are slavishly dependent on human-written software to exhibit it. But most people would find that comparison hopelessly understating the sophistication and wonder of human intelligence, and completely overlooking the self-awareness implied in the term consciousness.

One of Raymo's sentences is worth quoting in full. "As for myself, I look at the trillions of interacting cells that are my body, the webs and flickering neurons that are my consciousness, and see a self vastly more majestic than the paltry soul illustrated in my grade-school catechism as a circle besmirched with sin." This is hardly fair, pitting an adult's mature understanding of science against third-grade simplicities. Try reversing the roles: "As for myself, I look at the powerful draw of love in Augustine's *Confessions*, the awesome capacity for evil in *The Brothers Karamazov*, and see a self vastly more majestic than the paltry colored glossies in my grade-school textbook showing the relative positions of the gall bladder and the pancreas."

STEVEN HOTOVY

Pick your premise

Norris, Tenn.

To the Editors: In his discussion of science and religion, Chet Raymo asserts: "We must come to terms with this scientific truth: There is no such thing as a disembodied self....Scientists have plumbed the human machine and found no ghost, no thing that lingers when the body's substance turns to dust."

There is something singularly unattractive in Raymo's construct of this "scientific truth"; it is built upon the premise that we are but magnificent robots. To prop up

(Continued on page 28)

CORRECTIONS: William B. Prendergast's "Shifting Allegiance" (January 13, 1995) contained a minor factual error. Fifty-five—not 54—of the 230 Republican House members in the current Congress are Catholic. The count on which the article relied was made by *Congressional Quarterly* at a time when the outcome of one race—the California 22nd District—was still uncertain. The election of Congresswoman Andrea Seastrand in that district raised the number to 55.

Because of a production error in the Human Family advertising supplement (December 2, 1994), a line was incorrectly added to a description of two books published by Holiday House. The copy should have read as follows:

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COMMONWEAL

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Clinic killings

The shootings at two women's clinics in Brookline, Massachusetts, last month should be a call to the prolife movement to clarify once again its basic priorities and examine how they are to be carried out in thought, word, and deed.

Catholic moral teaching in no way legitimates acts of premeditated murder under the rubric of "justifiable homicide," even in defense of vulnerable and unprotected human life. That fact must be articulated again with the fullest clarity and urgency by the bishops of the United States. While continuing to deplore the legal killing of millions of unborn children, the bishops must underscore the universal scope of the church's commitment to life, exemplified by their teaching on the consistent ethic of life. They must make clear that the lives of employees of clinics where abortions are performed, and the women who seek assistance there, are inviolable.

Over the last two years, Catholic leaders in this country have made a concerted effort to clarify church teaching prohibiting the use of violence in the anti-abortion movement. In particular, Cardinals John O'Connor, Bernard Law, and Roger Mahony have all made strong, detailed explications of why Catholic teaching forbids homicide to save the lives of the unborn: Good ends never justify evil means; violent force is legitimate only as self-defense, but even then it is subject to the requirements of public order; taking the law into one's own hands, even in the case of preventing abortions, contradicts the church's teaching; and the use of violent means undermines the credibility of the whole prolife movement.

An even more timely argument was put forth by Archbishop Oscar Lipscomb of Mobile, Alabama (*Origins*, September 29, 1994). He refuted the renegade priest, David C. Trosch, and stripped Trosch of his priestly faculties. Trosch not only advocates violence to deter abortions, but last July, in a letter to members of Congress, outlined a "target list" (including members of Planned Parenthood and the National Organization of Women) who would be "sought out and terminated as vermin are terminated."

Though the archbishop's statement was forceful, Trosch continues to advocate murder and is still identified in the media—technically, they are correct in doing so—as a Catholic priest. Trosch's ongoing advocacy is a detriment to the lives and souls of others; it is a public scandal. Since Catholics who obtain or facilitate abortions *de jure* separate themselves from the church; and since the U.S. Catholic church in the 1960s publicly excommunicated those who persisted in advocating segregation, many are led to ask why the church hesitates to excommunicate Trosch. The Presbyterian church did excommunicate the Rev. Paul Hill well before he murdered two people at a Florida abortion clinic last year.

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But something more than the reiterating of Catholic teaching and the punishment of those who flout it is needed. On a number of occasions, Mohandas Gandhi, the prophet of nonviolence, was forced to deal with the violent tendencies of his followers by calling off campaigns in which his movement for Indian independence was engaged and by fasting publicly. Cesar Chavez did the same thing in this country in 1968, fasting for twenty-five days to purify the motives and actions of his nonviolent movement for farm workers. It is time for the U.S. bishops to propose that members of the prolife movement follow the example of Gandhi and Chavez. The bishops could suggest a fast: from food, for a specified period; and from volatile acts and rhetoric on the part of prolifers, permanently.

Perhaps because of frustrations following the passage of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1993, some of those who protest at abortion clinics seem to have lost a sense of self-restraint. They intimidate others with their speech, graphic placards, and physical bearing in a way that belies respect for the dignity of the human person. One recent study—from the prochoice Feminist Majority Foundation—stated that one-fourth of all clinics they surveyed reported that doctors and staff members had received death threats. Public protest against abortion must be peaceful, principled, unthreatening, and unfailingly civil. If this can be achieved, it will be in marked contrast to much prochoice rhetoric, and all the more persuasive for it.

Cardinal Law has wisely proposed a moratorium on demonstrations at abortion clinics located in his archdiocese. If and when such demonstrations do resume, their spirit should convey a consistent nonviolent message. Over time, it would be hoped that such attempts at self-discipline by the anti-abortion movement might even have an effect on the incendiary and often bigoted language of prochoice groups (*see* Planned Parenthood's comments about Cardinal O'Connor in its *New York Times* ad, January 5, 1995).

The genius of the Catholic insight into the sacredness of human life—attested to with great clarity by Mother Teresa at a national prayer breakfast last February before President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore—is that it finds this value in *all* human life: even in its least apparently winning, least immediately recognizable, or least comely and readily lovable manifestations. This intuition is the source of hope for resolving the abortion impasse. It holds that change is possible because rational people can recognize the value of their own lives, and thus the lives of others; and that fetal life is deserving of respect precisely because it is part of the continuum of life through which we all pass and on which we all depend.

The odds that such a realization will eventually "ripen" in the hearts of most Americans will rest on many factors, including how men, the church, and society in general value women and children. It will also depend on a trust born of courtesy and respect. So let a fast be declared. The sanctity of life can be witnessed to in many ways.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE, R.I.P. The English journalist Peter Hebblethwaite is dead (*Tablet*, December 24/31, 1994). As a young Jesuit, he covered the final session of Vatican II. He then became editor of *The Month,* where he followed postconciliar developments. He left the Jesuits in 1974 and began covering the Vatican for the *National Catholic Reporter*. His writing informed, enlightened, and delighted (or outraged) many faithful readers. Differentially edited versions of the same stories, tending to the brash in the *NCR* and the subdued in the *Tablet* (London), were always a reminder of cultural differences. His affectionate and moving biography of Pope John XXIII (Doubleday), records the pope's struggle to bring the council about and keep it on course.

REPORT FROM NORTH CAROLINA

THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

JESSE HELMS'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY

From the high dais of the Republican National Convention as well as from a low podium in a small-town school hall, Jesse Helms has delivered what he must regard as the ultimate in motivation. "The Lord," he says, "may be giving us just one more chance to save America."

That often repeated line opens a window into the mind and motivation of the North Carolina Republican who is the new chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It is a line that offers a starting point for explaining why so much of Helms's biting rhetoric, his persistent obstructionism, and his far-right politics springs from a certain religious reservoir. To know what motivates Helms is to understand what lessons he draws from the Bible.

Clearly, the seventy-one-year-old Helms is a mixture of Old South and New Right. He was reared in Monroe, North Carolina, a small town where his father was both police and fire chief. He grew up a Southern Baptist at a time when few of its white congregations questioned the prevailing racial segregation of the region and when the denomination's pre-Depression struggle between fundamentalists and modernists still echoed. To those who read the Bible literally and who rejected efforts to mesh the scientific with the religious, disagreements were more than mere differences of opinion between reasonable people. "Anybody who did not agree, it was automatically assumed that they were non-Christian, or even atheist," says Allen Page, the dean of undergraduate instruction and a professor of religion at Meredith College, a Baptist women's school in Raleigh.

When in Raleigh, Helms worships at the Hayes-Barton Baptist Church, located at the edge of his leafy midtown neighborhood. It is a church where the theology is as moder-

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ate and mainstream as its red-brick, tall-steeple architecture. And yet, in 1976, when he was still a little noticed junior senator, Helms published a collection of essays fully imbued with the mindset that Page describes. The 122-page paperback is titled, *When Free Men Shall Stand*, and it is subtitled, "A Sobering Look at the Supertaxing, Superspending Superbureaucracy in Washington" (Zondervan, 1976). But it is more than that; it is a sobering look at the deeply held Christianity that makes Helms a politician who seldom moves toward the center and who, though often isolated, ought not be underestimated for his tenacity and for his sense of mission in seeking to turn the political dialogue rightward.

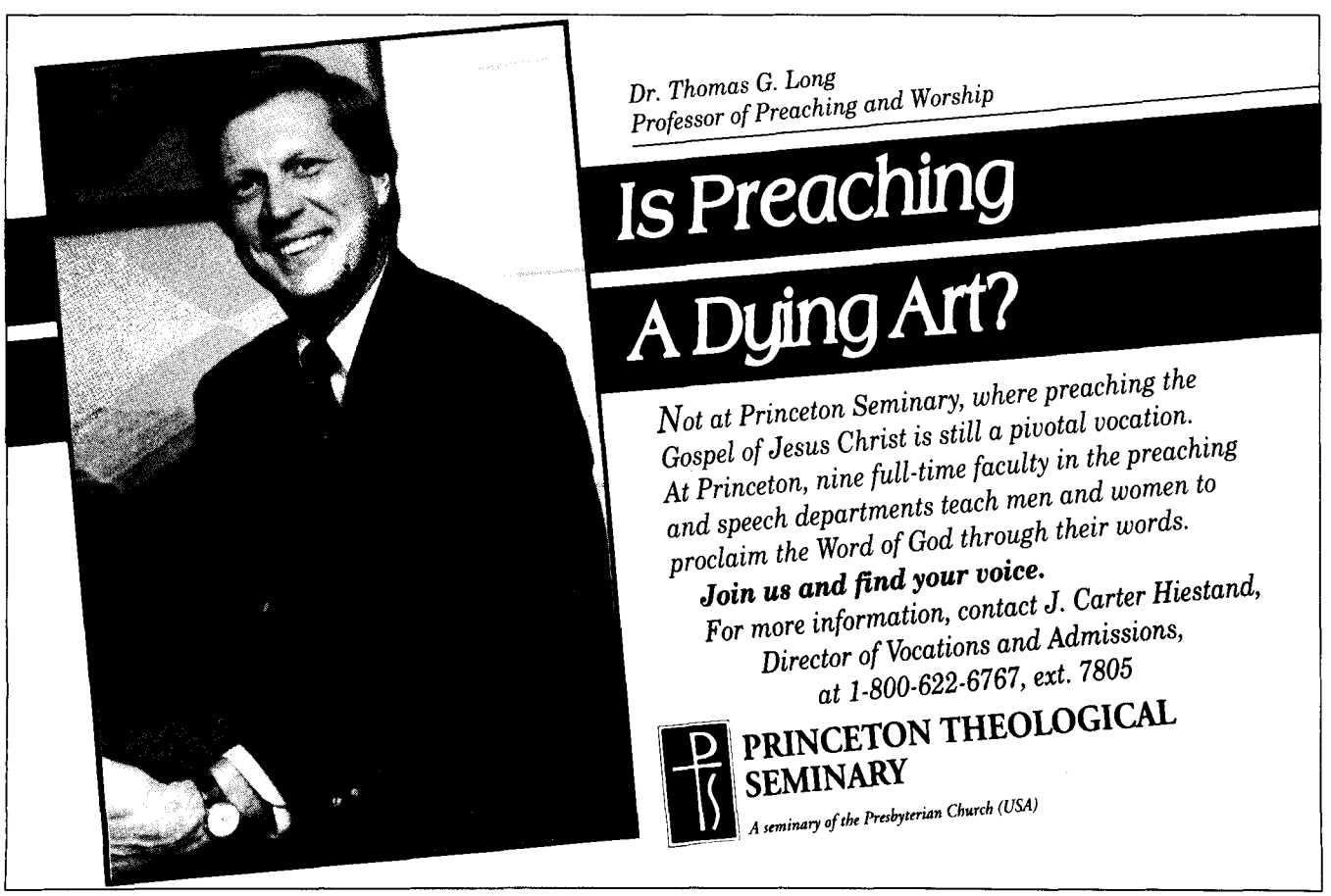
"Our political problems are nothing but our psychological and moral problems writ large," Helms writes in the preface. He looks back fondly on his boyhood between the two great wars, and he observes, "I never detected in the days of the Depression the kind of spiritual desolation and cynicism, nor the urge toward violent revolution, that has gripped our country in the recent past." Helms assails the New Deal, the Fair Deal, the New Frontier, and the Great Society for having "regimented" and "federalized" the nation.

Americans, he says, "have bought every nostrum the liberals have been so insistent to sell us." To "halt the long decline," the senator proposes his brand of conservatism—a brand rooted in the Bible but practically oblivious to the implications of such critical passages as the Sermon on the Mount.

In subsequent essays, Helms defines liberalism far more broadly than its usage in conventional political discourse. Read the context in which Helms places liberals, and you begin to sense why he shows so little restraint in assaulting not only their political positions but also their characters. He speaks of the "incompatibility of liberalism with political freedom and biblical morality." And he writes "Atheism and socialism—or liberalism, which tends in the same direction—are inseparable entities: when you have men who no longer believe that God is in charge of human affairs, you have men attempting to take the place of God by means of the superstate. The all-provident government, which these liberals constantly invoke, is the modern-day version of Baal."

In a 1993 book, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right* (University of North Carolina Press, 1993), Michael Lienesch, a professor of political science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, reports that within the movement of which Helms is a leader, "free enterprise is seen as an ethical system as well as an economic one." To Helms, the profit motive has a biblical O.K. in the parable of the talents, and ownership of property is among the highest of rights. Helms writes in *When Free Men Shall Stand* that "freedom is the only basis for prosperity," and that "the only guarantor of freedom in the world has been the Christian faith."

In the story of the Plymouth Colony, Helms finds a lesson about the superiority of free enterprise to communism. As he tells the history, the Pilgrims suffered from disease and hunger under the share-in-common provisions of the Mayflower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Compact. Only when they switched to free enterprise in 1623—Governor Bradford's giving permission to each man to set aside enough corn for his own family—did the colony prosper. Helms does not mention in his writings, nor derive any lessons from, the communal arrangements established among the early Christians.

Like others on the Christian Right, Helms draws a parallel between Israel in the Old Testament and the United States today. "Spiritually we know that we are all Israel," he writes. When Israel obeyed God, the nation prospered, says Helms, and when Israel fell into immorality, civil strife resulted. Just as God would answer the prayers of the Israelites, the senator says, so God would respond to Americans who call upon him. Near the end of *When Free Men Shall Stand*, Helms writes:

> Each of us, then, must place our hope and reliance in God, and in that hope and reliance turn our energies to restoring a government and society that serves us as sons of God. Adroit politicians have successfully divided us into groups of minorities so that now each of us belongs to one minority or another. Thereby our strength is sapped in a disunity designed to keep us in check: a disunity disguised with such utopian slogans as Peace with Honor, Minimum Wage, Racial Equality, Women's Liberation, National Health Insurance, Civil Liberty, and so on and on.

Of course, all of these "utopian slogans," as Helms describes them dismissively, flow out of Old and New Testament concepts of the dignity of the person as a member of the human community. They also reflect modern social, cultural, and economic change. But nothing more defines Helms over the course of a long public career than resistance to change and government activity that promotes it.

At times, Helms can come off as a "smart aleck," as a friend in Raleigh conceded privately after the senator popped off about President Bill Clinton's needing a bodyguard should he visit a military base in North Carolina. But it would be a mistake simply to regard Helms, a former TV editorialist, as a Rush Limbaugh-like dispenser of pointed political one-liners dressed up like folk wisdom. Counterassaults by too-secularist opponents, especially from the cultural Left, have served only to harden Helms's resolve. If he resists change with a nod to theology, it is nevertheless a powerful driving force in his own life and his own politics.

After all, he is talking to himself as well as to his audiences when he suggests that God may have granted only one final opportunity to save America. Though he accuses unnamed "adroit politicians" of creating disunity, Helms actually would save America by dividing it. It is Helms who is the classic polarizing politician, who brings to Congress the us-against-them mentality that flourished amid the internal struggles of Baptists and Southerners to cope with change during his formative years.

FERREL GUILLORY

Ferrel Guillory is southern correspondent for the News and Observer *in Raleigh, North Carolina.*

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

A DREAM DEFERRED

MARTIN LUTHER KING'S LEGACY BETRAYED

Every January we go through a ritual commemoration of the life and career of Martin Luther King, Jr., but we rarely listen to what he had to say. We almost never hear his religious message, and we seldom ponder his vision of a society in which people "will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

We are now in the third great period in the American history of white-black relations. The first was the age of slavery, which lasted from the seventeenth century to the 1860s. Next came the era of racial segregation, which lasted from just after the Civil War until the 1960s. Since the late '60s we have been living in an era which, as yet, has no definitive name.

When it first began, we thought this third age would be called "the age of integration." But we now see, after thirty years of bitter and disappointing experience, that it can hardly be called that. True enough, some blacks have been integrated into the American mainstream: they went to college, got good jobs, have healthy incomes. But at the subcollege-educated level, blacks are not doing so well; and the further we go beneath that level, the worse their situation becomes relative to the rest of the population.

By the time we reach the black "underclass" we are in a world that is actually worse off in many ways—in terms of crime, violence, substance abuse, broken families, out-of-wedlock births—than poor blacks were in the pre-1965 era. Back then we thought poor blacks were at the rock bottom of American society; their situation, we believed, was as bad as the situation of any American could possibly get. We were mistaken. Today's underclass has fallen through the floor that we used to think was rock bottom, and we have no reason to believe that it has hit true bottom yet. It seems to be falling in slow motion down a bottomless pit. Impossible though it would have been to believe back in the days of the civil rights movement, lower-class blacks in the "age of integration" are probably less integrated into American society than were their forebears of fifty years ago.

The inclusion of blacks in American society, then, has been partly a success, partly a failure. Which is to say, it has been a failure; for this is the kind of thing where nothing less than full success can count as real success.

Even well-educated, well-paid blacks who have "made it" have the feeling that they have not really made it. And they are

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correct to have this feeling. For racial identity is still a salient status in America. If you are black, your personal achievement remains subordinate to your membership in a racial category. Thus as long as blacks as a group have not won full membership in the American community, it will be impossible for even the most successful African-American individual to feel that he or she has won full membership.

This is America's third failure at finding a satisfactory basis for black-white relations. Slavery wouldn't do. Segregation wouldn't do. And this—whatever we finally decide to call it—won't do either.

There are many causes for this latest failure, but one of the most important has been the assumption that there can be such a thing as a benign race consciousness. For 350 years prior to the 1960s, race consciousness—that is to say, white consciousness of another person's African ancestry—had been powerful in America, almost always producing bad consequences. The sensible strategy would have been to erode race consciousness, to persuade white Americans that race did not really count. This was the strategy Martin Luther King, Jr., had in mind when he made his "content of their character" remark.

And the strategy worked. During the first half of the 1960s the nation went through a collective examination of conscience on the question of race and, in principle at least, came to the conclusion hoped for, namely, that race is a minor and relatively unimportant category. Victory had not been won, but it was at hand.

But then defeat was snatched from the jaws of victory. In the late '60s and early '70s, a combination of white liberals and black leaders (King now being dead) decided it was possible to have a benign race consciousness. As in the past, a person's African ancestry was to be regarded as his or her principal defining characteristic; but now, instead of considering this a negative trait, white Americans would be expected to consider it a positive trait. The United States would continue to be divided on racial lines, but this division would no longer be a division into black and white castes, separate and unequal. Instead, we would be divided into black and white clans, clearly distinct from one another but equal and cooperative, both clans being peer members of the great American tribe. To promote this equality and cooperation, it would, of course, be necessary to introduce racial quotas into schools, jobs, legislative redistricting, etc.

Given the long racist history of British America and the United States, the notion of a benign race consciousness should have been seen as a kind of contradiction in terms, nearly as preposterous as the notion of a benign anti-Semitism. But black leaders imagined it was possible to combine the incompatible ideals of integration and black nationalism, a synthesis of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Stokely Carmichael. White liberals (with the exception of some Jews for whom anything smelling of quotas was suspect) suspended their critical faculties out of a desire to remain in harmony with blacks. And almost everyone else shut up for fear of being called racists were they to turn critics.

Two decades later the color line is still present in American society. To this day

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an African-American's blackness remains his or her most salient trait in the eyes of most white Americans, as it does in the eyes of many black Americans.

White racial bigotry, which once seemed to be well on its way to becoming an extinct species, is growing in strength. So is black racial bigotry. Worse than white bigotry, however, is white indifference: by and large, white Americans have lost interest in the troubles of their black fellow citizens. They have stopped listening, and they have largely stopped caring in any but a ritual manner.

In the last thirty years, American life has been very disappointing in many ways, but no disappointment is more heartbreaking than the failure of racial integration. For in this case we had victory in the palm of our hands, victory over the most abiding social evil in American history—and we threw it away. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS Liz Leibold McCloskey

ORPHANED AT BIRTH

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

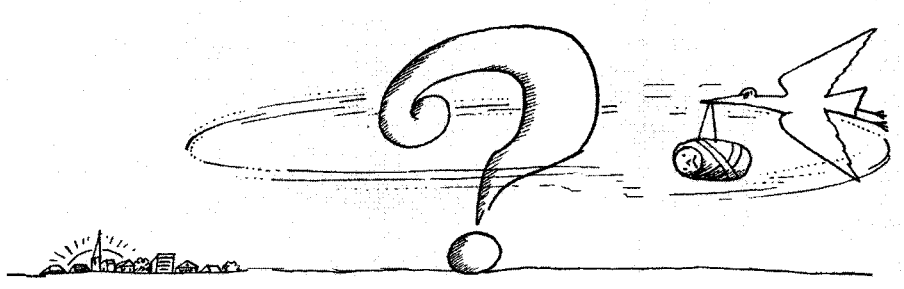
Periodically I have an identity crisis: I wonder if I can or want to claim my Catholicism. I was smack in the middle of one when my family had the peculiar honor of being on stage at the National Lay Forum, a conference sponsored by the U.S. bishops, having a "typical dinner conversation" in front of a ballroom full of people. I dwelt a little too long on my discomfort with the notion that really good Catholics should have a lot of children, on the lack of guidance and models for Catholic women trying to balance family and career, and on how I have yet to feel at home in my adult life in any Catholic parish. Now, the family joke is that when my parents received a complimentary copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Loyola University Press, 1994) to thank us for our appearance, it was a hint that we all might want to read up on the whole thing.

A month later, I was one of four American Catholic delegates at the World Conference on Religion and Peace (about which I will write in a future column). My co-delegates were a bishop, a monsignor, and a staff person from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. I felt a little like I was sneaking in. Yes...I have some of the credentials: born and raised Catholic, fairly up-to-date on the sacraments, a priest in the family. It is definitely part of my story. But...I do not always believe that I am a part of the church's story. I am tired of hearing people say at Mass "For us men and our salvation," and "Jesus became Man." And I know it has been written about exhaustively in the pages of *Commonweal* and elsewhere, but I also want to add my voice to those who have expressed their utter disbelief in John Paul II's definitive ruling on women priests.

When Jane Dixon became the first woman Episcopal bishop in Washington, D.C., a Catholic friend and I attended that consecration. As we left the church, my friend Lucy said, "Don't you feel like an orphan?" And I knew exactly what she meant. When I attended the ordination of an extraordinary woman friend in December, I felt incredible pride and joy to be participating in that celebration. When I see the faith, the spirituality, the grace, the strength, the generosity, and the intelligence of some of the women that have been called to priesthood and are free to answer that call in other churches, I am sad for what the Catholic church is missing. The Catholic church is blessed with many women who have dedicated their lives to ministry, particularly those who have chosen religious life, but it burns me up that they are considered laypeople. Sister Marjorie Keenan, the highest ranking Catholic sister in the Vatican, pointed out that fact to me.

Opponents of women priests argue that one should not be too focused on who can or cannot be a priest, because the church is much more than that. I know, I know—I grew up after Vatican II and I know that the people of God are lay and clergy. And I know that women have not been ignored in the life of the church. There are many women who are integral to the Catholic story—Jesus' Mom, Mary; his aunt, Elizabeth; his close friend, Mary; early church leaders, Phoebe and Claudia; the spiritual and intellectual giants—Clare, Teresa, Catherine; and the modern-day saints—Dorothy Day, Mother Teresa. And I am appreciative of the papal declarations that celebrate the dignity and worth of women. But I also know that the stories and statements *about* women are always about women and not *by* women, and they don't tell the whole story.

The American Catholic bishops learned how difficult it is to try to speak for women when they were unable to produce an adequate pastoral letter on women. I commend their approval of the inclusive language lectionary, even though it was reversed by the Vatican. And I think the bishops have restored some confidence by their adoption last November of "Strengthening the Bonds of Peace: A Pastoral Reflection on Women in the Church and in Society." Their statement affirms the demanding leadership positions that Catholic women hold both outside and within the church, and calls for careful study of canon law to divine which authority positions



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(such as cardinal) women might legally hold. Unlike many other church statements to and about women, this one does not talk about the "role" of women, as if there were only one, but calls for a celebration of women's diverse gifts and talents.

It is still not enough for me. I want to hear women preaching. I want to see women presiding at the Eucharist. The Mass is the telling and the retelling of our story of faith. Women should be at that altar as a visible symbol that we are part of that story. And when the story is told, the language should be inclusive. Jesus did not come down from heaven "for us men," but "for all of us and our salvation." Jesus did not just become a man, "Jesus became one of us."

I take it seriously that God wants us to be like children if we are to enter the Kingdom of God. So maybe we should take our cues from the children. This Christmas it became crystal clear to me how best to keep a child's interest in a story. I kept trying to tell my son Brian the Christmas story, and after the third or fourth try, he stuck his lips out and said "I hate Jesus." So my husband Peter and I came up with a different story: Brian and our other son Collin and all of their cousins were taking a walk in a faraway land on a clear, cold winter night when they saw a bright, shining star. They followed the star. An eagle helped fly them over a mountain and an alligator let them ride on his back across a river. Finally they came to a barn. And all their favorite animals were there. All the animals were singing "Happy Birthday" to a little baby named Jesus. And Brian and all of his cousins wanted to give a present to the baby. Then Brian got to talk about what everyone would give. Brian would bring a tiger, Collin a "binkie," Jack a truck, Kate a picture, and so on. Each gift was totally fitting. Everyone gave what he or she loved best.

There's nothing better than a gift carefully chosen and freely given. It is a gift to see faithful women in the courtroom, the classroom, the board room, the hospital room, and the family room. But for those women who wish to bring the gift of the gospel and the Eucharist, the message is that there is no room. If that doesn't change, some may start listening to a different storyteller. □

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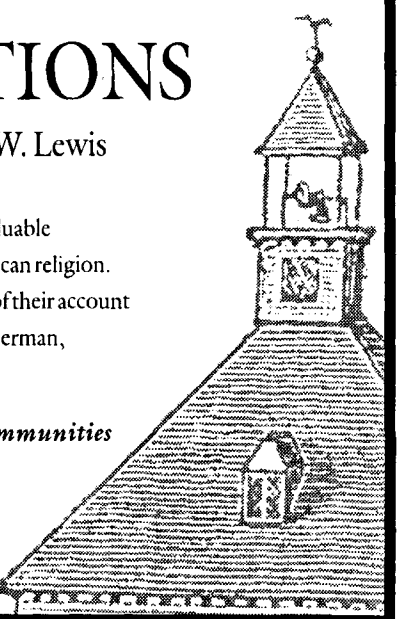

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EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE

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Nothing is more important to the health and future of the church than an authentic understanding of the Eucharist. One of the great achievements of Vatican II was to restore the Eucharist to the center of the church's life. In principle, the Eucharist always occupied that center, while, in practice, a panoply of devotions often displaced it from the hearts and minds of ordinary believers. They went to Mass, but once there often devoted themselves to acts of individual piety. The council changed that, but not without raising new problems. Thirty years later, Catholics are increasingly asking whether their understanding of the Eucharist has been diminished even as attention has been focused on it.

From the start, some Catholics steeped in the Tridentine Latin Mass found the new vernacular rite bewildering, and their complaints have echoed through the succeeding three decades. But most Catholics accepted, even embraced, the new rite, with its theologically dramatic emphasis on the active role of the community. Did the results represent what the liturgical renewal had envisioned? Or did renewal end in a banalization of the sacred mysteries? By all accounts, the liturgical changes were implemented hastily, sometimes by fiat and with little preparation, sometimes in a mood of giddy innovation far from the intention of the reform—a return to the church's earliest traditions. Today, both critics and sympathizers of the conciliar reforms voice concern about the fate of eucharistic piety and understanding.

That concern was given new urgency by a *New York Times* poll last spring suggesting a dramatic departure among Catholics from the traditional doctrine of transubstantiation (*see* page 11). Of course, one poll does not establish the extent to which Catholics have ceased to believe in the "real" and "substantial" change that takes place in the Mass. And whatever changes have occurred may reflect practical failures in preaching, catechizing, and celebration of the liturgy as much as any confusion or inadequacies in our theological understanding. Still, the latter have played their part. That is why, with a keen sense that the following articles are far from the last word—that all but saints and mystics must speak haltingly and tentatively about this profound mystery—we have devoted this annual theology issue to "Eucharistic Presence." THE EDITORS

WHO IS AT THE TABLE?
Reclaiming Real Presence

Nathan D. Mitchell

Ritual allows those who cannot will themselves out of the secular to perform the spiritual as dancing allows the tongue-tied man a ceremony of love.

—Andre Dubus, *"A Father's Story"*

Traditionally, Catholic identity has been rehearsed in rituals that reach deeper than dogma—rituals characterized by a palpable, public "otherness." It is precisely this quality of otherness, of distinctive difference, that many observers feel the post-Vatican II liturgy of the Roman rite has forfeited. Critical discontent focuses especially on two points: (1) the reformed rite's presumed failure to provide participants with a sense of mystery; (2) the apparent decline, even among devout churchgoers, of belief in the Real Presence.

This second point was reported recently by Peter Steinfels in the conclusion of a four-part series on Catholics in America ("Future of Faith Worries Catholic Leaders," *New York Times*, June 1, 1994). A *New York Times*/CBS News poll conducted in April 1994, found that "almost two-thirds of American Catholics believe that during Mass...the bread and wine can best be understood as 'symbolic reminders of Christ' rather than as actually being changed into Christ's body and blood. Even among...Catholics who said they attended Mass every week or almost every week, 51 percent described the rite as strictly symbolic." As Steinfels notes, complex beliefs cannot be measured very accurately by standard polling procedures; still, such results are disconcerting, if not downright alarming.

Should the postconciliar liturgy be blamed for this decline in traditional belief about Real Presence? The answer may well depend on how one responds to the first point: Are the reformed

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rites able to "bear the weight of mystery"—or not? Some years ago Aidan Kavanagh warned against an encroaching *embourgeoisement* of the liturgy, the signs of which are visible everywhere—in the "ministerializing" of the middle-class laity, in the celebration of politically correct values (meeting, joining, speaking out, creating community), in the creation of churches that look like shopping malls. Under such conditions, Kavanagh commented, "the liturgy becomes perceived by many as less an obedient standing in the alarming presence of the living God in Christ than a tiresome dialectical effort at raising the consciousness of middle-class groups concerning ideologically approved ends and means" ("Liturgical Inculturation: Looking to the Future," *Studia Liturgica*, 20:1 [1990]. Similar fears were voiced by the late Mark Searle, whose research led him to conclude that Roman Catholic worship is in danger of becoming a casualty of cultural assimilation:

> American Catholics are in process of becoming more characteristically American than characteristically Catholic. In other words, cultural assimilation appears to be occurring at the expense of a distinctive Catholic identity. In their moral, political, and social attitudes, Catholics are becoming indistinguishable from the rest of the population. Where liturgy is concerned, this means a growing alienation from precisely that sense of collective identity and collective responsibility which the liturgy might be thought to rehearse" ("The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life," *Worship*, 60:4 [1986]).

Responses to the postconciliar liturgy and its impact on American Catholic identity seem increasingly polarized, perhaps because, as Richard Gaillardetz has recently argued, our national quest for transcendence has been privatized (angel-mania, "transcendence without community"), even as our quest for community has been vandalized by ideologies of pseudo-intimacy ("community without transcendence"). Caught in this cultural crossfire, many Catholics feel compelled to choose between rival options: a liturgy characterized by solemnity, awe, and splendor (sustained by a "high" theology of Real Presence) versus a liturgy characterized by human warmth, sentiment, and ritual impoverishment or squalor (sustained by a "low" theology of Eucharist as "commemorative meal") ("North American Culture and the Liturgical Life of the Church," *Worship*, 86:5 [1994]).

Such options, in my view, are misleading. Liturgical "otherness" should not be mistaken for high-church ritualism, nor should Catholic identity be confused with a retro-ideology that seeks, in Adrian Cunningham's trenchant phrase, to "resacralize reaction." As Catherine Bell has said, "an ethos of timeless continuity based on the exact repetition of unchanging tradition is only one strategy of ritualization." That strategy will inevitably shift when a community's ritual schemes "can no longer effectively interpret and dominate the social milieu." Thus, while the late medieval ritual corpus did effectively acknowledge and advance claims of a transcendent unity between church and society, between priestly mediation and access to God, those claims

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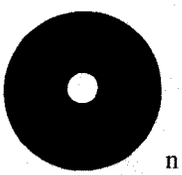

Signs & numbers

In April 21-23, 1994, a *New York Times*/CBS News poll queried a national sample of Americans by telephone. About thirty-five questions were asked specifically to those responding that their religious preference was Catholic. A question about the Eucharist was included because previous polling had given little attention to matters of worship and spiritual life. Unlike most other opinions recorded in the poll (on sexual morality, ordination of women, etc.), the responses concerning the Eucharist were new and striking.

Considerable thought went into the wording of the question. The goal was not to spell out exact theological understandings of the Mass but simply to identify the general direction of Catholics' belief by posing distinct alternatives that would be brief and clear over the telephone. The actual question asked on the phone was:

"Which of the following comes closest to what you believe takes place at Mass: (1) The bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, or (2) The bread and wine are symbolic reminders of Christ?"

The results for all self-identified Catholics were:

Body and blood: 34% Symbolic reminders: 63%.

Among Catholics aged 65 and older:

Body and blood: 51%. Symbolic reminders: 45%.

Among Catholics betwen ages 18 and 29:

Body and blood: 29%. Symbolic reminders: 70%.

Among Catholics who reported going to Mass every week or almost every week (50% of the Catholics polled):

Body and blood: 44%. Symbolic reminders: 51%.

Among Catholics aged 18-45 who attend Mass weekly or almost weekly:

Body and blood: 34%. Symbolic reminders: 63%.

Undoubtedly further polling with some variations on the wording would be valuable. Would the result have been different if the first choice had included "under the appearances of bread and wine," like the formulation in the old *Baltimore Catechism*?

Another point for reflection: there is no empirical baseline against which these findings can be compared. Did all Catholics in, say, 1930 or 1950 really grasp Catholic teaching on transubstantiation? No one knows. At least some Catholics, despite pious devotional lives, may have been hazier about the Eucharist than commonly supposed. Still, given practices such as fasting from midnight, First Communion preparations, and Benediction, could general belief have been anything like the recent findings? PETER STEINFELS

Peter Steinfels is senior religion correspondent for the New York Times.

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were largely shattered by the advent of the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution. Moreover, the argument that the unintelligible mumblings, gestures, and silences of the late medieval and Tridentine liturgies provided "ordinary" people with a stable center of "sacred meaning" in a cruel, preindustrial world sheds no real light on the ritual poverty of believers in the late twentieth century. One must remember, too, those medieval rites which promoted such a "powerful sense of community" also championed an ecclesiastical polity that was aggressively authoritarian and (to quote Gaillardetz) "repressive of the rights of many, particularly women."

One cannot help feeling that the call to resacralize worship is sometimes a "code" for recreating a culture in which aging white males of European origin call all the shots, make all the rules, and determine all the parameters of legitimate discussion. The sacral, transcendent character of Christian worship does not, after all, rest upon an arbitrary ensemble of acts and artifacts (incense, orphreys, genuflections, plainchant). It arises from the ability to perceive "heaven in ordinarie," God's abiding presence in a wounded world. In my view, more fruitful avenues for revisiting the doctrine of Real Presence are opened by three areas of recent research: (1) the theology of the body; (2) the prayer of the assembly; and (3) the liturgy of the world.

B*ody*. The human body—its origins and destiny; its control and reproduction; its sexual and political significance—is a lightning rod for Catholics today. Still, contemporary scholars have reached consensus on a surprising number of points about the body's meaning in Christian tradition. They agree, for instance, that the human person is not simply someone who "has" a body, but someone who is a body. The body is not merely an "object" (a machine, a tool, a "husk" or prison) but a subject. In a profound sense (as Caroline Bynum has shown in her studies of medieval Christian women), the body *is* the self. In a word, the body is the *whole human person* in relation to God, world, and others. It is the supreme meeting place between God and humanity. Until recently, the hard sciences seemed to treat the body as a liability, a subjective source of feeling and fantasy irrelevant to "objective" standards of research. But today that view has changed. "Any adequate account of meaning and rationality," writes philosopher Mark Johnson, "must give a central place to embodied and imaginative structures of understanding by which we grasp our world." Reason is not purely abstract and transcendent after all. Human understanding is *incarnate*; hence it is the task of modern science to "put the *body* back into the *mind*" (*The Body in the Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1987).

Theology takes such speculation a crucial step further by asserting that history's meanings and goals will be achieved only in a transfigured world of glorified bodies. As Karl Rahner wrote in a homily on the Ascension, "The Ascension is a festival of the future of the world...for the Lord has risen for ever. We Christians are, therefore, the most sublime of materialists....We recognize and believe that this matter will last forever, and be glorified forever...[for] God has assumed it as his [*sic*] own body."

Christian teaching about resurrection thus focuses not on an "immortal soul," but on a human body that forever enacts human existence, personality, and relatedness. Nor is resurrection the exclusive province of Christology, for it also affirms, as James Keenan says, that "through their corporeality, believers are related, and thus can be caught up in Christ, who transforms that corporeality." In short, Christians confess not only a conversion of heart, soul, and mind; they also believe in the body's final transformability. As scholars like Peter Brown have demonstrated, theology's emphasis on the body's intrinsic worth liberated it from the claims of the *polis* (that is, from utilitarian control by the state, by cultural or sociopolitical forces): "Christian preachers endowed the body with intrinsic, inalienable qualities. It was no longer a neutral indeterminate outcrop of the natural world, whose use and very right to exist was subject to predominantly civic considerations of status and utility" (*The Body and Society*, Columbia University Press, 1988).

In time, of course, the church substituted claims of its own for those of the *polis* (especially in matters pertaining to women). But the basic principle had been established: the body's integrity is strictly God-given and intrinsic; it is not an "entitlement" granted by the state or erected by religious authority.

All these views have a direct bearing on eucharistic theology. The body of Christ offered to Christians in consecrated bread and wine is not some*thing* but some*one*. In the Eucharist, Christ is present not as an "object" to be admired but as a person (a "subject") to be encountered. Thomas Aquinas understood this well, and so insisted that the ultimate intent (the *res*) of celebrating Eucharist is not to produce the sacred species for purposes of reservation or adoration, but to create that united body of Christ which is the church. Roman Catholic eucharistic tradition thus insists that the Christological cannot be separated from the ecclesiological. The body of Christ is not only "on" the table but "at" the table!

The body of Christ that is *at* the table (that is, the church, the *ecclesia*) must be understood as an essential partner in the liturgical act, and not merely as a passive recipient of Christological benefits. Hence Vatican II's insistence on "full, active, and conscious participation" by the people in eucharistic worship. We become one with Christ's body only by joining ourselves to the Spirit-filled body of believers through grace, faith, and the paschal sacraments of initiation. Indeed, as the New Testament shows, it was precisely the early church's empirical experience of Christ's continued presence and activity in the Spirit that made Easter faith possible and plausible. Easter is about *both* "what happened to Jesus" and "what happened to those who believe in him." Easter meant not only that "Jesus is risen," but that through the Spirit's power the body of Christ has become a people. The implications of this point are vast. As Mary Collins has noted, it means that "we must rethink the familiar grammar for the symbol Body of Christ as its relates to resurrection belief, to the Spirit-filled church, and to the sacrament of the Eucharist" ("Eucharist and Christology Revisited: The Body of Christ," *Theology Digest*, 39:4 [1992]).

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The Prayer of the Assembly. Tensions between Christological and ecclesiological aspects of the Eucharist have dominated Western thinking about Real Presence for centuries. Among medieval theologians, Christology triumphed: the "essential moment" of eucharistic consecration was identified, strictly and exclusively, with the liturgical recitation of Jesus' words (the "words of institution"). In support of their view, medieval glossators were fond of citing patristic authorities, especially Ambrose, who in his sermons to the newly baptized seemed similarly to insist on the consecratory power of Christ's words (the *verba Verbi*). Theological principle (*lex credendi*) gradually overruled liturgical praxis (*lex orandi*). The prayer of the people was thought to have no real role in relation to the Real Presence. (Keep in mind that though a single voice proclaims it, the eucharistic prayer is not an individual's possession but the *assembly's act*, as articulated by its presiding minister.) Thus, the larger meaning of the whole eucharistic prayer—its acts of praise, remembrance, and intercession; its prayer that the Spirit transform *both* gifts *and* people; its character as ritual deed of a faith-filled assembly—was reduced to insignificance.

The contemporary theological effort to recover the consecratory meaning of the *whole eucharistic prayer* has been significantly advanced by the work of the late Edward Kilmartin, S.J. In a pivotal article published posthumously last summer, Kilmartin argued that the theologians who created

> the Western scholastic synthesis...had no grasp of the literary structure and theological dynamic of the Eucharistic Prayer and accompanying symbolic action. They reduced the whole problematic to an imaginary "central space" within the Prayer, with the result that the eucharistic words of Christ were poised in the air without access to the other elements of the structure ("The Catholic Tradition of Eucharistic Theology: Towards the Third Millennium," *Theological Studies*, 55 [1994]).

A new starting point for the systematic theology of Eucharist is needed, Kilmartin contends, one that begins with the *lex orandi* and takes seriously the ritual and theological dynamics of the eucharistic prayer. The richness and complexity of Kilmartin's argument cannot easily be summarized, but it may be useful to draw attention to three points:

- Presence. Eucharistic theology in the West has been preoccupied with the question of how Christ becomes present in the elements of bread and wine. Since at least the ninth century, theologians have struggled to explain the exact nature of the change (or "conversion") that the species (the bread and the wine) undergo in order to accommodate this presence. But the very effort to clarify eucharistic conversion raised intractable problems of another sort. For example, if Christ is risen, glorified, and impassible, can his natural body be "located" anywhere else than heaven? Does history repeat itself in sacraments? If Jesus offered himself "once for all," is the language of eucharistic sacrifice meaningless? These are questions that a Buddhist might argue "do not lead to edification," but they

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Nancy G. Westerfield

Salad Ladies

The salad ladies, who oversee the church's
Myriad social functions, cater their artfullest
For funeral luncheons. Widows, they have all
Been there before; and the new widow
To be recruited for next year's bake sales
And bazaars and funeral luncheons, will be
Won by such salads as they toss and gel.
Too well they know the solitary salad
For a meal before the long vigil bedside
At the hospital or Home, the fast-food
Salad-bar that serves for dinner out
Alone. Grieving their loss, the salad ladies
Tear at lettuce, not their hair. The marinade
Of souls that they prepare is distilled from tears,
With bitter herbs and extra-virgin olive oil.

have dominated Western theology for more than a millennium.

Kilmartin suggests that these are precisely the wrong questions. The central issue of eucharistic theology is not "how does Christ become present to us?" but "how do we become present to Christ?" "The movement," Kilmartin notes, "is not from the historical event of the cross to us; the event is not withdrawn from its historical context and made to come to us. Rather, we go to the event, are made present to it. The movement by which we meet a 'passed' event is called memory. It is by remembrance that we meet the sacrifice of the cross." Liturgical activity does not so much "render present" Christ and his saving work; it is rather the ritual, cultic means by which we enter newly into Christ's presence and work. In short, the basic eucharistic question is not "who is *on* the table?" but "who is *at* the table, and how did we get there?" In the Eucharist, two bodies meet: The risen body of Jesus (present now "sacramentally" and "substantially") and the "*corpus Christi quod est ecclesia.*" Indeed, as Aquinas knew, the presence of the former is precisely for the sake of the latter. That is why Aquinas understood that the final meaning and ultimate intent of the Eucharist is precisely "the unity of that body which is the church."

● The Eucharistic Prayer. The significance of this prayer is precisely *ecclesiological*, for in it, the church comes to be, enacts and defines itself. That is why the liturgist Aidan Kavanagh has described the celebrating church as "the body-of-Christ-become-a-people," and why Karl Rahner argued that the Eucharist creates church. In the eucharistic prayer, we become present to Christ in his paschal mystery, in his historical saving work. Kilmartin summarizes the point this way:

> The *transitus* ["paschal passage"] of the assembled community to the Father is expressed liturgically through the Eucharistic Prayer. The *transitus* of Christ himself is recalled and affirmed as the single *transitus* in which the believing assembly participates through the medium of the eucharistic celebration. At the same time the Holy Spirit is identified as the mediation of the presence of Christ to the church and the church to Christ.

The conclusion is inescapable. Eucharistic Real Presence cannot be adequately described or defended unless the right questions are asked. And the most basic of these is not "how does Christ get to the bread?" but "how do we get to the table, and what happens to us once we're there?"

● *In Persona Ecclesiae.* Reclaiming the doctrine of Real Presence thus requires that *ecclesiology* be restored to a eucharistic synthesis that for centuries has been almost exclusively Christological. Nowhere is the need for such restoration more evident than in the relation between the ministry of the ordained priest and the eucharistic celebration. It has become fashionable over the past few years to insist loudly that the presiding priest acts "*in persona Christi.*" This insistence may be valid, but it misses an equally important aspect of ministry, viz., that the priest acts "*in persona ecclesiae,*" a point long recognized by our best theologians. Thus, for example, Thomas Aquinas could write that the priest "performs a deed of the entire church in consecrating the Eucharist, because it is a sacrament that belongs to the whole church" (*Commentary on the Sentences*, Bk. IV, d. 24; q. 2, art. 2, ad 2). Aquinas unambiguously recognized that the very nature of Eucharist (hence of ministry, hence of Real Presence) is ecclesiological. "It is by reason of the ecclesiological nature of the Eucharist that the priest offers for the whole church," concludes Kilmartin, "not immediately because he offers in the person of Christ...." In a word, the priest can "offer Mass" in the first instance because he is a member of the believing assembly.

T*he Liturgy of the World.* Karl Rahner argued that the "first" or "primary" liturgy that a church assembly celebrates is what he called "the liturgy of the world." By that he meant the fact that the world itself is always and everywhere grasped at its roots by God's's presence or grace. In fact, for believers "sacraments" are humble landmarks, "small signs" of the fact "that this entire world belongs to God." And God causes this "liturgy of the world" to be celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the world's history.

Catholic sacramental tradition operates on the principle that we can encounter God by encountering the human. Thus Aquinas wrote that through the humble material realities of daily life, through the simple staples of bread and wine, through the concrete particularities of human life, you arrive, through sacrament, at the mystery of God which is the goal of faith, of grace, and of the whole sacramental economy.

Every sacrament launches a search, a process of discovery through which we reconnect with something absent, something missing, something unknown, something (in short) *transcendent*. That, of course, is the great paradox of symbols. They si-

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multaneously give and take away; they call us to the threshold of *presence* by first leading us through an abyss of *absence*. Thus for Aquinas (and for the theological tradition he represented) every symbol is an invitation to self-transcendence. Symbols cannot lead us "*per nota ad ignota*" unless we first consent to an absence, an irreducible "otherness," a mystery we cannot control or evade. So in the Eucharist, the known material quantities of bread and wine draw us into the paschal mystery of Christ's body and blood—yes. But at the same time, that mystery of Christ's-body-become-a-people *redefines* matter and *reconfigures* our perception. The reality of sacrament forces us to recognize that matter itself must bear the weight of glory. For if bread and wine can trigger access to a risen life, then the whole world must have burst into flame. The root of all matter has been transfigured. The sacramental principle thus affirms what Catholic poets have always known: as Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God." And Edith Sitwell wrote in "The Bee-Keeper":

This Earth is the honey of all Beings, and all Beings
Are the honey of this Earth...O bright immortal Lover
That is incarnate in the body's earth—
O bright immortal Lover Who is All!

The primary liturgy through which Christians experience the Real Presence of God in Christ is nothing more or less than "the liturgy of the world." It is to this liturgy, "smelling of death and sacrifice," that all the church's ritual actions return. There, God is met in the confused impurity of the human condition—in the weight of mineral; the light of honey; the sound of the words "night" and "good-by"; the heaping abundance of wheat, ivory, and tears; lifted objects of leather, wood, and food; faded photos that gather our lives like walls; the red noise of bones; the thunder of flesh; the smack of kisses, gasps, and sobs; the roar of water passing across bone; muffled snow; garlic and sapphires in the mud. There, God is met as One who *suffers with us*, as One who forgives a thief on the cross. All this is what the liturgy of the world celebrates; all this is what the liturgy of the church points to. We arrive at mystery, at Real Presence, at God, only by embracing the human with all its poignancy and terror.

Real Presence is an essential aspect of eucharistic theology in the Catholic tradition—but "resacralizing reaction" will not reclaim it. We can experience Real Presence anew only by renewing the covenant between Word and World. Catholic sacramentalism can be recovered only if we recognize afresh that human history is a history of meaning; that those meanings are celebrated through rituals of civility; that language is not only revelation, but responsibility and grace as well; that God is celebrating the liturgy of the world—*in us*—through the length and breadth of creation. □

Nathan D. Mitchell is associate director for research at the Center for Pastoral Liturgy, University of Notre Dame. His books include Cult and Controversy *(Pueblo, 1982) and* Eucharist as Sacrament of Initiation *(Liturgical Training Publications, 1994).*

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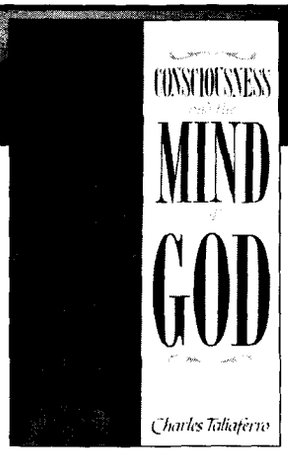

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Join Pax Christi in supporting The Right to Refuse to Kill

1995 marks the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the end of the Holocaust; it marks the beginning of the nuclear age with the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; it marks the founding of the United Nations.

1995 also marks the 50th anniversary of the formation of a Catholic peace organization for the reconciliation of former enemies and for gospel peacemaking in the world, Pax Christi.

In December 1965, the Catholic bishops of the world, at Vatican II, affirmed the right of conscientious objection to military service in the Pastoral Constitution, "The Church in the Modern World."

On March 10, 1987, the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations passed by a large majority a Resolution asserting that,

> "Conscientious objection to military service should be considered a legitimate exercise of the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Pax Christi, which enjoys consultative status with the United Nations, has made several interventions to the Human Rights Commission on the issue of conscientious objection. In March 1993, the representatives of Pax Christi spoke before the Human Rights Commission in Geneva in support of a clarifying Resolution regarding conscientious objection. The fact that conscientious objection became an agenda item for the Human Rights Commission arose out of the written and spoken intervention of the representative of a Catholic Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with consultative status.

We of Pax Christi note that at its 51st session from January to March 1995, the Human Rights Commission will examine the question of conscientious objection on the basis of comments provided by governments. As an NGO, Pax Christi will supply comments on the question received from its national sections in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas and Australia.

Pax Christi strongly supports the Resolution of the Commission on Human Rights of March 8, 1993 (E/CN.4/1993/L.107) on conscientious objection to military service, and asks that the Commission give special consideration to the following points:

1. Objectors who reach their position during military service should be released into alternative service under civilian control. This should apply to objectors in a volunteer army.
2. In conflicts, especially those involving ethnic and religious issues, unwilling conscripts whose convictions are opposed to war and killing should be accorded asylum and safe transit t another state or area.

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3. Alternative civilian service should not be punitive in nature nor longer than the term of military service.

4. Persons who have been recognized by their governments as conscientious objectors should, when qualified, be eligible for works of peace in such specialized agencies as the Office of High Commission for Refugees, UNICEF, UNEP, etc.

The question of conscientious objection is attached to the item, "The Role of Youth in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights." Youth will be motivated to respect human rights when their own human rights are respected. One right claimed by more and more young people in this bloodstained century is the right to refuse to kill.

Catholics who refuse to kill find their inspiration in Jesus who accepted suffering and refused retaliation, and who taught in the Sermon on the Mount to forgive injuries and love the enemy. Aware that the disarmament programs of governments proceed slowly, young people choose personal disarmament, the disarmament of the heart.

A UN agency reminds us that war begins in the minds of human beings. Peace, too, begins in the minds and hearts of human beings. Young people, passionately committed to the UN aim of a warless world, refuse to be a part of the enterprise of war aimed at injuring and killing human beings and destroying their homes and livelihoods. Their refusal, as conscientious objectors to military service, shows them as the prophetic vanguard of world peace.

"For what purpose did God endow men with reason and free will if, despite this, we have to render blind obedience?"
Franz Jaegerstatter—Father of 3 beheaded for his refusal to fight in Hitler's war.

"What is every man given a conscience for, if not to use it?"
Henry David Thoreau

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SIGNS & DISGUISES
Sorting out transubstantiation

P. J. FitzPatrick & Paul Baumann

PAUL BAUMANN: *In Breaking of Bread: The Eucharist and Ritual* (Cambridge, 1993) is a fascinating and I think important book. Your argument about the inadequacy and historically limited nature of the accepted accounts of transubstantiation is challenging. Your sense of the Eucharist's power and eloquence, and your suggestion that a more demanding engagement with the reformed rite may be the only way to help resolve antagonisms prevalent in the church today are compelling. Especially intriguing is your discussion of the Eucharist's sacrificial nature and how it embodies the "darkness" and ambivalences of the human condition.

P.J. FITZPATRICK: Thank you. One way the darkness shows itself is the embarrassment we feel at eating and drinking the Lord's body and blood. We must not try to explain away any such embarrassment. What we encounter in the Eucharist—body, blood, food, drink, death—is not accidentally encountered. We are concerned with the heart of our being and with its enlargement. And this concern is one that finds expression in sacrificial ritual and language.

Eating itself shows our bodily dependence on the earth. And what goes with eating has an ambivalence that makes a meal a natural place for ritual. Blood can be shed and life lost—and yet thereby our own lives and possibilities are sustained. For us to be nourished, the earth has had violence done to it—and yet violence must be contained if we are to survive. A ritual meal is a communal acknowledgment of our needs, our abilities, our dependence on each other, our mutual trust. It can embody our awareness of God and our quest for him.

The need to consume is endless, but nourishment cannot ward off death forever. So the ritual of sacrifice can express, not only an acknowledgment of dependence, but a hope for sharing in what goes beyond the human condition, of which death must be the ending. That is why sacrificial ritual and language can go so deep into those who use them, deeper than the users can articulate. The ancient tradition of sacrifice is indeed shot through with darkness. But it does embody the belief that what lies beyond our darkness invites us; cares for us; is in some strange way open and vulnerable to our love.

In Aquinas, for example, the language and ritual of sacrifice is an acknowledgment of what Aristotle called our *doulé physis*, our nature held in bondage. But, for Aquinas and for us, it goes deeper. We confess that bondage to be more than illusion and misapprehension; we confess it to be a darkness that touches the very heart of our being. And so it is that the ambivalent associations that sacrifice encompasses—body, blood, food, drink, death—are united with the light shining in the darkness, with the work of the one who promises that, because he lives, we shall live also.

The use of sacrificial language about Christ is inevitable. The mystery of the Incarnation embodies and fulfills this tradition. The way to light and life lies through Christ himself, who for our sake went down into death, facing in his own body the darkness of this world. Now, as Aquinas points out, the last things to be said by friends about to leave us are those that sink deepest into our hearts. And that is why, Aquinas goes on, Christ instituted the Eucharist on the night he was betrayed.

We must learn to look at the eucharistic rite for what it is, and not attempt to reduce it to an ornamental flourish on a text which already says all that matters. The rite is inherited, handed down, and commanded to be carried out. It is the rite itself that is and must be what is primary; comment and reflection must lead toward it, not develop a life and direction of their own. As I see it, this independent "life and direction" is one of the problems that goes with transubstantiation.

BAUMANN: The doctrine of transubstantiation was part of an attempt to make speculation about the Eucharist intellectually respectable in the Middle Ages. But our knowledge of the material world is now vastly different. Is that why the scholastic account of the Eucharist, with its use of terms like "substance" and "accident," can no longer do justice to the eucharistic rite?

FITZPATRICK: Yes and no. The scholastic tradition was indeed broadly Aristotelian, and it was in that tradition that people in the Middle Ages tried to make sense of the changes in the natural world around them. Knowledge has indeed advanced since then. But it is not the obsoleteness of the scholastic terminology that worries me. For me, what scholastics write about the Eucharist is "Aristotelian" only in the sense that forged money is "money." They take terms from that tradition, and they abuse them to the point of nonsense.

BAUMANN: How so?

FITZPATRICK: First, a very brief account of what Aristotle says about change. Suppose we heat some water: what we end up with is the *same kind of stuff* as what we began with. For Aristotle, such a change is *accidental*—the substance of the water is first qualified by the "accident" *cold* and then by the accident *hot*.

BAUMANN: Are all changes "accidental" for Aristotle?

FITZPATRICK: No. In some changes, what we end up with is a *different kind of stuff* from what we began with. Imagine a carafe of wine being left open until the wine becomes vinegar. For Aristotle, this change is *substantial*; we no longer have wine, we have vinegar. As he would put it, the *matter*, which was first determined by the *substantial form* of wine, is now determined by the substantial form of vinegar.

BAUMANN: It's not an account that gives us what we expect nowadays from any scientific description of change.

FITZPATRICK: Indeed it is not. In fact, some would say that it was "philosophical," not "scientific" at all. But all that need concern us is the way it is used in a eucharistic setting. For better or worse, Aristotle has given an account of change in which something is determined first in one way and then in another: substance by its accidents, matter by its substantial

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forms. But the scholastic account of the Eucharist does away with such successive determinations or connections. Heat the water, and the two ends of the change are linked by substance; let the wine go sour, and the link is the matter. But in the Eucharist there is no link at all—the "whole substance" of the bread becomes the "whole substance" of Christ's body. And for me that makes no more sense than "dry water" or "the floor of the bottomless pit." You just cannot treat Aristotle's terms like that and expect them still to make sense.

BAUMANN: But surely the Eucharist is a mystery, and transubstantiation admits as much?

FITZPATRICK: Of course the Eucharist is a mystery, and if transubstantiation did no more than acknowledge the mystery I would not object. But it does far more. It takes terms devised to express change, and it puts them together in a way that makes no sense. Because it does this, it offers an appearance of sense that turns a mystery into a misleading riddle.

BAUMANN: Why a riddle? And why misleading?

FITZPATRICK: First, a riddle. Whatever you think of Aristotle's account of change, one thing in it must be grasped: the distinctions drawn between substance and accident, or between matter and form, must not be reified. They must not be turned into what I call *dissections*. The account is concerned with change in a single entity; it is not dividing that entity into component parts. Aristotle insists on this, and so does Aquinas in commentary on him.

But the eucharistic adaptation of the distinctions is bound to turn them into dissections or component parts; it has no other choice. According to transubstantiation, the accidents of the consecrated bread remain accidents, but are preserved in existence by divine power. The substance of Christ's body replaces the substance of bread under these accidents. This is not mystery, it is a grotesque of our own devising. We have a picture of some inner, invisible machinery, where components can be reshuffled by divine power.

BAUMANN: But surely the Eucharist involves divine power?

FITZPATRICK: Of course it does. No account of the Eucharist is acceptable that reduces it to a human memorial or an expression of fellowship. But it is a matter of where divine power is understood to be operating. Let me cite you a passage about transubstantiation from Cardinal Newmann's *Apologia*. It sums up what I am attacking: "But for myself," Newman writes of transubstantiation, "I cannot indeed prove it, I cannot tell *how* it is. But I say, 'Why should not it be? What's to hinder it? What do I know of substance or matter? just as much as the greatest philosophers, and that is nothing at all'...It deals with what no one on earth knows anything about, the material substances themselves."

To begin with, Newman's phrase "I cannot tell *how* it is," deflects our attention from the question he ought to be asking. It is not the "how it is" that matters, it is the coherence of the "it" itself. Aquinas writes lucidly in one of his works about ancient riddles, "Could God make a square circle?" He says that the terms of the proposal do not hold together. In acknowledging

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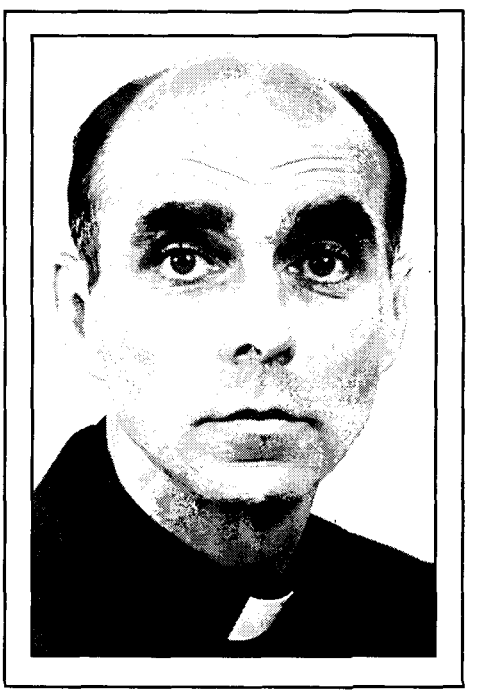

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that God could not make a square circle we do not have a lack of God's power, we have a lack of something possible. So it is with transubstantiation. We cannot make divine power do duty for intelligibility. We have got ourselves into a muddle, and we must start by getting out of it.

But there is still more amiss in what Newman writes. For him, "material substances" are what "no one on earth knows anything about." This kind of move is made by many defenders of transubstantiation: science can get no further than the accidental order, and so on. This is a very odd argument indeed. Science can make mistakes, as any human activity can, but to make "material substances" inaccessible to it is to join the company of those who claim that we never really *know* what things are. Yes, what I am eating looks and tastes like chocolate, and I saw it being made from the usual ingredients. But it might not really be chocolate; just as I never know what is in your mind, whether this penny will drop, whether anyone else exists. This is philosophical skepticism, and once it gets going it's hard to stop. We need to stop it at the start, by showing the emptiness of it. And what strange company for an account of the Eucharist to be in! Convenient in one way—the eucharistic presence can be insulated from all else—but the insulation is bought at the price of emptiness. The time-honored phrase "looks like bread, tastes like bread, but is not bread" makes as little sense as the skeptic's rumination over chocolate.

BAUMANN: You said that transubstantiation was "a *misleading* riddle"? In what way does it mislead?

FITZPATRICK: It misleads because it confuses signs with disguises. A sign does not compete with what it signifies, a disguise does compete with what it conceals. There is the famous Sherlock Holmes story where Holmes, with seemingly supernatural powers of intuition, concludes upon meeting Dr. Watson for the first time that Watson has been in Afghanistan. Holmes does so on the grounds of certain things about Watson's appearance. He pays attention to things—signs, if you will—that less observant people overlook. Those signs do not contradict Holmes's conclusion, they are a means to it. The distinction between signs and disguises is further illuminated in a scene where Holmes pretends to be dying. Holmes is careful not to let Watson near his bed, for fear that his mere disguise will be penetrated.

"Look, are you interviewing me *or am I interviewing* you*?"*

Signs are not mufflings, they are manifestations. Disguise has nothing to do with the Eucharist, skepticism about appearances has nothing to do with it, hidden machinery in the depth of the bread has nothing to do with it. Transubstantiation is a misleading riddle.

BAUMANN: If transubstantiation can no longer guide us, what is the alternative? You are also dissatisfied with newer sacramental theologies put forth by theologians such as Luchesius Smits and Piet Schoonenberg and sympathetically criticized by Edward Schillebeeckx. These newer accounts often go by the name of "transignification." But it is notorious that these accounts have been charged with compromising the reality of the eucharistic presence. Does not your own rejection of transubstantiation force you in the direction of those accounts? If Watson has been in Afghanistan, are you not heading for the Netherlands?

FITZPATRICK: I have read widely in these and other Dutch and French sources, and—for what my opinion is worth—I do not think that the reality of the presence is compromised by them.

This is not the point for me. My objection to the new accounts is that, beneath all the differences in terminology, they are of a piece with the older. They too divorce appearance and reality; they too confuse signs with disguises.

BAUMANN: In what way?

FITZPATRICK: Let me introduce my complaint by acknowledging the debt I owe to these and other recent authors. They have exhibited the complexity of presence for human beings, and how it goes beyond simple physical juxtaposition. They show how human presence takes a special form in giving, and the role of the body here has been given its due. Creation itself is to be seen as a gift, a reality bestowed upon us, a revelation that both discloses and veils; our own makings of sense take place within this reality. And the Eucharist itself is given an essentially ritual and salvific setting: it is the fulfillment of the Passover, its mystery is a sign of the mystery by which we are members of Christ's body. These points, of course, are not wholly novel (Aquinas makes much of the last of them), but they have been displayed to advantage in the newer authors.

For me, the trouble starts with what I have called "The Fallacy of Replacement." That is, in many of the newer accounts what is exalted is deemed to overwhelm and to replace what is humble. That fallacy menaces much that is good in the new accounts. Typically for these newer accounts, the redemptive place of Christ in the plan of salvation gives him the final word as to what things are. This permits some writers to conclude that empirical realities have "no more than a relative significance." It leads others, who write quite compellingly of the bestowal upon us of reality as a gift, as a mystery that both veils and reveals, to claim that the Eucharist forces us to acknowledge a distinction we do not normally make between appearance and reality. At this point, the claim is often advanced that sense-experience never reaches reality.

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BAUMANN: Isn't there a measure of truth in that? Why do you call this a fallacy?

FITZPATRICK: Because transignification *insulates* the eucharistic presence, just as the older accounts did. And it insulates it by the same means—divorcing appearance from reality. A proper distinction between appearance and reality does not need "forcing on us"—we should not be alive if we were not intensely aware of it! And sense-experience, like all other manifestations of human knowledge, is incomplete, relativized, and can mislead. But there are humble contexts where it works, and where words like "bread" and "wine" work. And those contexts must be respected. It is not a matter of denying Christ the last word; it is a matter of letting humble words mean the humble things they do.

A sacramental theology should see the Eucharist, not in competition with our workaday knowledge, but as a cumulation of it, a use which respects the humble reality it transcends. This approach will lack the deceptive clarity of an account that insulates. It demands that we keep alive and yet keep in check a supremely important intuition: that a mystery confronts us, and that we have signs as we set out on the quest that is our response to the mystery. Signs here are clues to be followed, not disguises to be penetrated. They go down to the depths of our being. There is the basic significance of eating in human life; the associations of a ritual meal; the meaning of the ritual of the Passover; and the transcending of that ritual by Christ at the Last Supper. By moving along this "Way of Ritual," as I call it, we direct ourselves to the mystery of the eucharistic presence. The Way of Ritual does not eliminate the mystery; on the contrary, it acknowledges the mystery by its very inadequacy. It is not an "account" of the Eucharist in the way the older and newer expositions are accounts.

BAUMANN: The subtitle of your book is "The Eucharist and Ritual."

FITZPATRICK: Precisely. Ritual is the whole point of the book. I am trying to display ritual for what it is, not in terms of anything else. You might say I am trying to obey Wittgenstein's command to philosophers: not to say what it *must* be, but to *look* and see the Eucharist for what it is on its own terms. Indeed, I would add a command of my own: not to say what it *might* be, but *live*.

BAUMANN: Why do you add that command?

FITZPATRICK: Because I think it points to something better than the "insulation" I have criticized. Let me briefly say why.

Consider two things that stand out today in the Roman church: a changed liturgy after the council and a pervasive discontent. The Old Mass gave silence to the congregation and an almost exclusive role to the priest. The altar served for all his activity; he had his back to the congregation; the central part of what he recited was in silence; in that part, the words of consecration were set apart, typographically and posturally. The New Mass distributes roles, assigns different places to different actions in the liturgy, offers a wide range of Scripture to be read, and places the words of institution in the whole setting of the prayer of thanksgiving. We have in the contrast between the Old Mass and the New Mass two *cultic pictures*, the older of which goes with insulation while the newer, I think, does not. The older form of the Mass was a cultic picture that went with the kind of theological speculation found in Aquinas. It is no surprise, for example, to find Aquinas writing that the essence of the Eucharist lies in the consecration of the matter, and that the sharing by the faithful is something subsequent. What he wrote, the Old Mass exhibited.

But this picture has changed dramatically. The pattern of ritual has a force of its own, and we must learn from it. I suggest that the cultic picture exhibited by the New Mass—which is much more a sign of the unity of the faithful in Christ—is at odds with the picture transubstantiation reflects. But interventions from Rome continue to exhibit the older cultic picture. Rome tends to speak a kind of monologue calling for a simple response of acceptance. The discontent is inevitable, as long as there is this gap between the practice of organization in the church and the picture exhibited by its celebration of the Eucharist. What is amiss at Rome is far more than a matter of personalities: it is, yet again, insulation. Insulation is not an alternative. What needs to be embraced is vulnerability.

BAUMANN: Explain. Briefly.

FITZPATRICK: By vulnerability I mean an acceptance of the church's past as both revered and unsatisfactory; an openness of the church to the whole of human activity and need, in which it can both learn and learn to minister; a resolve to hold the ritual balance of past and present in a world that so needs it—the world for which Christ died. □

The Rev. P.J. FitzPatrick is emeritus reader in philosophy at the University of Durham, England. In addition to In Breaking of Bread, *he is the author of* Apologia pro Charles Kingsley *and* Birth Regulation and Catholic Belief.

Paul Baumann is the associate editor of Commonweal. *This interview was conducted via the mails and intermittently working fax machines. The two collaborators only hope its substance and accidents hang together.*

WHERE SYMBOLS REALLY MATTER

Paul Baumann

My aunt, my mother's older sister, died in September after a fierce but relatively brief struggle with lung cancer. As a Navy wife—her husband is a retired rear admiral—she was buried in Arlington National Cemetery, just across the Potomac from the nation's capital. Her funeral Mass was held in the chapel at Fort Meyers, adjacent to Arlington. Military pallbearers bore her flag-draped casket in and out of the church as well as to the grave site. Her funeral Mass was celebrated by a Navy chaplain, who gave the final graveside blessings dressed in his Navy whites.

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This is not the time or place to write about my aunt's life. I would, however, like to describe her funeral Mass, for I have thought about it a great deal.

"If I could find a Mass like this, I might actually consider going to church," one of my brothers whispered to me at the end of the service. Except for funerals or weddings, my brother hasn't been inside a Catholic church in probably twenty years. Yet I was not entirely surprised by his comment. I, too, had been impressed. "I'm afraid not many Masses are done as well as this one," I said.

What was it about the military chaplain's celebration of the Mass that is so often absent in the liturgy?—or at least the ones I go to. The tone set by the chaplain was formal, direct, and disciplined, but never stuffy or aloof. He didn't italicize any of the prayers with dramatic inflection or elaborate on them ideologically. Clearly, he didn't think anything needed to be added to the words of the Mass itself. His voice was strong and clear and his movements purposeful. In the best sense, he presided, he didn't implore or dictate or merely participate. He handled the chalice and every other object on the altar with an assurance that reminded me in some way of how a doctor grasps his instruments or how a good carpenter handles his tools.

And beyond the deft choreography and his considerable personal presence, something else was at work. It seems to me that the chaplain instinctively presented himself to us as a *representative*—a bodily symbol—of an authority and reality much larger than himself. He stood for the community or institution as a whole in the way that the conduct of a judge can come to embody the rule of law. In this fashion, the priest conveyed a belief in the power and authority of what he was doing that was absolutely unambiguous; that was never merely personal and yet did not alienate.

What I think struck my brother at some unarticulated level was that the chaplain's posture and manner clearly conveyed a belief in the efficacy of the signs he was manipulating at the altar. The words of the Mass, the bread and wine, his own priesthood, were as necessary to the work of the world as any carpenter's square or doctor's scalpel. In short, he handled the elements of the sacrament as though they were real signs of the grace they effected.

"Yes, I have a last request. Who is your tailor?"

Why did this Mass make such an impression on my brother and even on the more liturgically jaded? Was it because the priest was a military man? I am not trying to equate military experience with the liturgy or the chain of command with the Body of Christ. Nor do I think good liturgy is confined to military bases. But I do want to suggest that social experience and social structure have implications for religious practice. Those who think that the authoritarian nature of military life can offer only false analogies to genuine worship or who think flag waving a form of idolatry, place aside your reservations for just a minute and consider the following.

As a Navy officer, the chaplain lives in a world that values signs—uniforms, hierarchical rank, flags, and many other rituals and nonverbal expressions of individual identity and group loyality—in a way that many of us "civilians" do not. The military, like other tightly knit and highly structured organizations—fire departments, athletic teams, the Girl Scouts, the mafia, some families, even some neighborhoods—believes in the efficacy of ritual and symbolic action.

Those of us who prize individual autonomy and social mobility tend to regard ritual as superfluous to the real business at hand. But in its ceaseless regard for solidarity and proper order, the military is always, to borrow a phrase from the anthropologist Mary Douglas, "making explicit its representation of itself to itself." And isn't that what, according to the two articles on the Real Presence in this issue, the church does in celebrating the Eucharist?

An example of the differing sensitivity to symbols is the regard in which the American flag is held by those in or out of the military. For soldiers, the nation's flag is not some extraneous emblem; it is the physical, crudely literal embodiment of what men and women in the military have dedicated their lives to defend. It naturally focuses their lives and drapes their coffins. In saluting the flag, they honor all it stands for. Many people outside the military think that saluting the flag or protecting the flag is a "merely" symbolic act—the flag's true meaning lies elsewhere. This is a limited perspective, I think. Only the iconoclast belittles such ritual acts as meaningless or unnecessary.

A strongly structured and bounded group like the military or an athletic team is more likely to develop an appreciation for signs and symbols than can be cultivated in most other walks of life. How many of us work or engage in activities that require public forms of symbolic expression that even remotely resemble the highly condensed symbolic actions and language of the Mass? Isn't it much more the case that we pride ourselves (often for good reasons) on being suspicious of precisely those external forms and rituals, such as saluting the flag or kissing the cross? I certainly do. Even voting is a purely voluntary responsibility in our loosely joined society. The logic of our workaday lives, spent largely in the pursuit of individual expression or achievement, naturally lends itself to the celebration of internal and personal spheres of experience. Public authenticity is hard to come by.

We rightly value our freedom and individual expression. But

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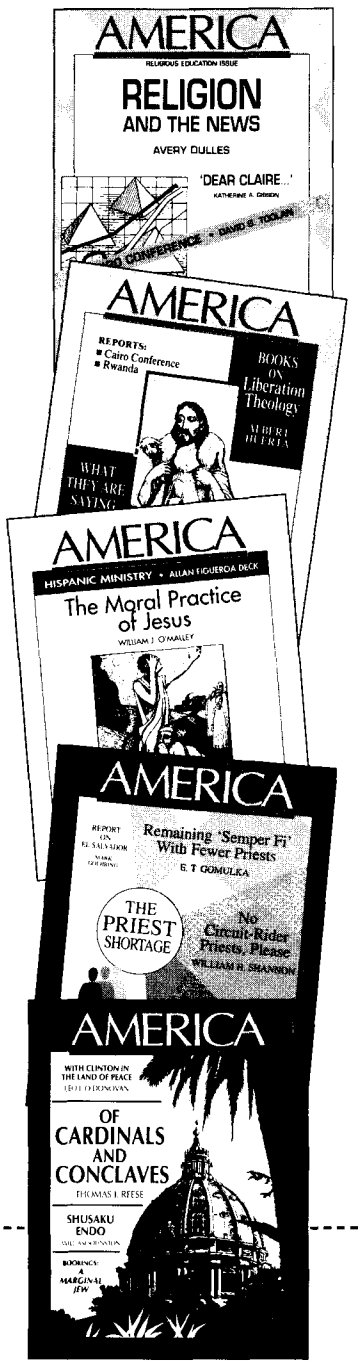

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to the extent that we live such independent lives, I fear that a ritual of cosmic solidarity like the Eucharist must seem increasingly opaque. Certainly, recent polls suggest that the gap between the experience and beliefs of American Catholics and traditional explanations of the Real Presence is widening.

I'm not arguing that we all must join the Navy or return to the ghetto church. I don't think a "restoration" is possible or desirable. Christian life and authority cannot be divvied up between the clergy and the laity as it is between an officer corps and the enlisted troops. But I do think that dissatisfaction with and grave confusion about the liturgy are widespread, and much of that uneasiness can be linked to our growing insensibility to the most basic sort of symbolic grammar or frame of reference. A way must be found to make modest signs of community identity and authority—such as meatless Fridays or the representative nature of the priesthood—resonate again. We cannot continue to strip away every tree from the dense symbolic terrain once built up around the Eucharist and expect the richest layer of topsoil—the Real Presence—not to erode. □

Paul Baumann is the associate editor of Commonweal. *He has obviously never served in the military.*

SCREEN

ANOTHER WASTELAND

'TOM & VIV'

Walking out of the theater exhibiting *Tom and Viv*, the film about the unhappy union of T.S. Eliot and Vivien Haigh-Wood, I entertained a strange fantasy which I shall now inflict on you. Envision, please, a marriage counselor, moistly sympathetic in mien and possessing the most soothing of voices, seated at his desk and gravely listening to the woes of his latest clients. Turning from wife to husband and back again, the marital mediator bestows his goodwill with perfect equity and censures no one. Their sad story told, the two sit in a state of near-collapse and await professional judgment. But no judgment comes, only all-embracing sympathy. "Nothing can be done but no one is to blame," the counselor intones. "No one *can* be blamed in these calamitous unions of incompatibles. But never fear. Your marriage may be over but your lives are not. Go from this office into your futures, and take with you my assurance that for all the arguments, the public embarrassments and flights of madness you have inflicted on each other, I have heard the unmistakable note of mutual love. There is no villain here, only two admirable, inevitable victims." The clients, a bit stupefied, perhaps, by such illimitable empathy, arise and turn to exit.

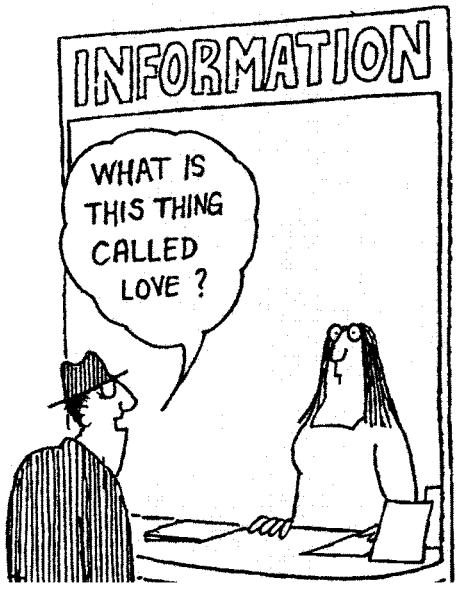
Suddenly, the counselor leaps over his desk and plunges his letter opener in the husband's back! Exulting over the corpse, he grins at the shocked wife, "Something you should have done a long time ago, deary."

Well, that's *Tom and Viv* for you. Its writers, Michael Hastings and Adrian Hodges (adapting Hastings's play), proceed for some time as if they were treating both participants in a conjugal catastrophe with equal compassion, but all the while they're sharpening their knives to skin Old Possum.

The first quarter of the movie, though not really gripping, is amiable, promising, attractive. The casting of Willem Dafoe and Miranda Richardson in the leads works quite well at the start. Though Dafoe was last seen machine-gunning his foes in the excellent espionage thriller, *A Clear and Present Danger*, he here conveys quite deftly both the fragility of Eliot's physique and the powerfully grinding mill of his mind. When the young scholar-poet looks out of a classroom window to gaze lovingly at the flapper Vivien hailing him from a moving car, we understand quite well the mutual attraction of these opposites. Dafoe's charming reserve and Richardson's equally engaging skittishness make us want to follow this couple as they seek out a life together. Terrible things may be in store for them, but the quality of the acting promises some revelations about human nature *in extremis*.

And the beginning of their woes, a wedding night wrecked by her hormonal imbalance and his revulsion-induced impotence, is staged by director Brian Gilbert with an economy that is both tactful and powerful. The camera moves through their hotel bedroom, pans over hastily cast-off garments, then freezes at the sight of Eliot gazing dejectedly out a window. After the usual guilty reassurances—"I know I can make you happy," "Please! I'm not blaming you," etc., etc.—he leaves for a walk but pauses to lean on the other side of the door in baffled longing; the director cuts to Vivien crouching inside, equally longing. It's an affecting moment.

Alas, nearly the last one in the movie. As we follow the marriage deeper and deeper into misery, we seem to be pushed further and further back from the characters. Vivien's slide into madness isn't just quick, it's precipitous, accomplished by the filmmakers mere minutes after the wedding-night scene. Miranda Richardson's specialties—brittle playfulness, barely leashed



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hysteria, feminist outrage—are all called for here, but with a vengeance, too much of a vengeance. Richardson is masterly as she taunts her husband and parents at dinner, peering over her plate at her victims like a demented crane. And her outbursts have all the high decibel fury Richardson always has at her command. Trouble is, that's all she's called upon to deliver. There's nowhere for her to go with her performance once our heroine unravels. At one point, Vivien confesses that sometimes she can hear the craziness of what she says, and that interesting remark suggests an aspect of their heroine that the filmmakers might have explored: pent-up sanity watching unleashed dementia within the same psyche. But that possibility isn't pursued. We are instead offered the titillations of crazy antics: Vivien trying to break into Eliot's publishing offices and pouring liquid chocolate through the keyhole when she's locked out; Vivien brandishing a knife at Virginia Woolf, etc., etc. Unless a writer or director can get inside madness and illuminate that awful terrain (as Shakespeare did in *Lear* or Ingmar Bergman did in *Persona*), insanity on stage or screen is nothing but a freak show.

But Willem Dafoe's plight is worse than Richardson's. She, at least, can show some flash and fire, but Dafoe, after a good start, is allowed only to slump, drone, and look baleful. It's not his fault that the script gives his talent no scope. If the filmmakers had really been attuned to Eliot, really curious about the many-sided spirit that dwelt behind his detached demeanor (V.S. Pritchett called the poet "a company of actors inside one suit, each twitting the others...."), monotony would not have doused Dafoe's performance.

As it is, Vivien flails, Tom quails, and the audience is left stranded.

In the last twenty minutes, however, the scriptwriters, as if awakening to the pointlessness of their work, try to recharge their project with the adrenaline of blame. At the (virtual) last minute a villain is found on whom the audience can fasten as the source of the woe that is this marriage. And, of course, that villain, in our age of pedestal pulverization, has got to be T.S. Eliot. How do the moviemakers tardily, hastily, and unmistakably indict him?

Nobody in the film, including Vivien's doctors, can understand the basis of her mental instability since it simply hadn't been discovered yet. Eliot certainly isn't to blame for putting his wife in a comfortable place (more of a health spa, as shown here, than an asylum) where she can receive, if not a cure, then at least the sort of care he can't give her. (In real life, it wasn't Eliot who committed his wife.) But, according to the film, when Vivien recovers her sanity after menopause (the hormonal problem having abated), there is no husband around to effect her release, for Eliot has refused to visit her for years. This cruel abandonment is the sin for which the moviemakers indict Eliot. And what do they adduce as Eliot's motive for such cruelty?

It comes out in a scene between Eliot and Viv's mother, the latter presented by both script and actress Rosemary Harris as a paragon of compassion and clear-sightedness. She denounces Eliot for his connections to Bloomsbury. "Once those Bloomsbury types got ahold of you," she claims that he ceased being the sort of man who would keep the promise he made to Mrs. Haigh-Wood always to stand by her daughter. To please some effete types who spend their time "writing nasty novels about their friends," Eliot has thrown his wife to the psychiatric wolves. I *may* have heard a feeble protest pass Willem Dafoe's lips at this moment, but I don't really think so. Mrs. Haigh-Wood, presenting herself and her family as the cream of England's gentry, exposes Eliot as a calculating American snob breaking into England's cultural establishment. And, the way the scene is written and played, Mrs. Haigh-Wood seems to be speaking for the moviemakers.

The entire scene is sheer philistine fudge. Bloomsbury—though hardly *the* cultural establishment—was certainly snobbish and cliquish, but the portrayal here of Virginia Woolf as a sort of Margaret Dumont matron betrays a vulgarity that condemns itself. And "nasty novels about...friends" hardly describes the productions of Woolf, Vita Sackville-West, or E.M. Forster. Furthermore, Eliot must have been conscious of Bloomsbury's scorn for Vivien years before the break-up. Yet he not only stuck by her but showed her the greatest affection until his love ceased.

And why did it cease? Nobody really knows. The poet was as complex a man as ever lived, and his torment must have been the most complex thing about him. To find a real, coherent story in the dissolution of this marriage, the moviemakers would have had to be the sort of artists who never settle for easy explanations. But easy explanations abound in *Tom and Viv*, abetted by glib dialogue, routine plot development, and plush, mostly bland direction. *Tom and Viv* manages the almost impossible feat of being sedate, confused, and malign—all at once.

RICHARD ALLEVA

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'To bless, to hallow, to show this bread'

EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE
A Study in the Theology of Disclosure
Robert Sokolowski
Catholic University of America Press,
$24.95, 247 pp.

John Garvey

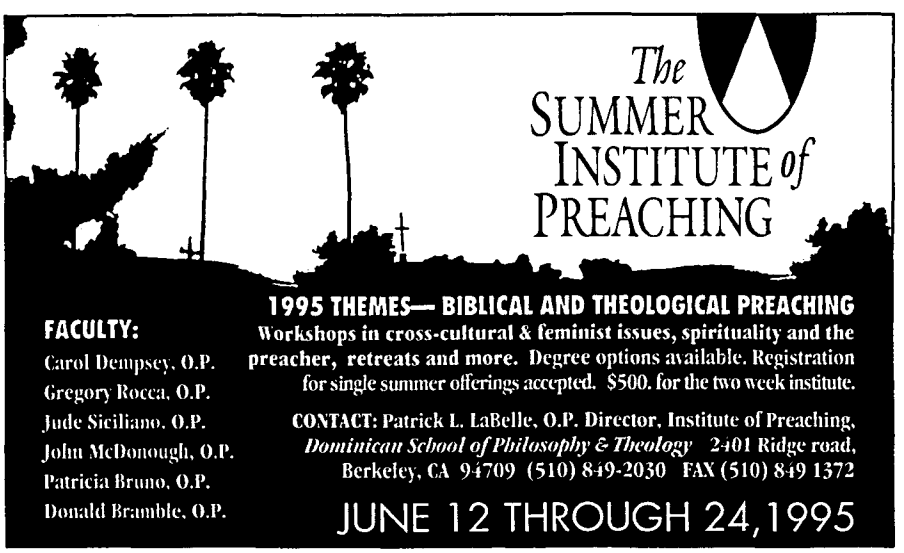
Toward the end of this important book, Robert Sokolowski notes that many recent writers on the question of eucharistic presence point out that "an important change in the concept of symbolism occurred in the transition between the Patristic period and the Middle Ages. For the Fathers of the church and for the ancient world generally, a symbol did not only signify something; it also was thought to participate in that thing and to make it concretely present. The symbolic was not contrasted with the real."

This strikes an Orthodox reader sympathetically. The eucharistic consecration in the Orthodox liturgy is completed with a prayer to the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon the people and the gifts, making them the body and blood of Christ. The anaphora of Saint Basil, used on the Sundays of Lent and on a few other occasions during the liturgical year, contains a striking difference from the usual formula, which asks that the Holy Spirit "make" the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ. The liturgy of Saint Basil asks "that by favor of Thy goodness Thy Holy Spirit may come upon us and upon the gifts now offered, to bless, to hallow and to show this Bread to be the precious Body of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, and this Cup to be the precious Blood of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ."

This sense of transformation as at one and the same time a disclosure, and the disclosure a transformation, is close to the spirit of what Sokolowski tries to do throughout this book.

Sokolowski's chosen tool is phenomenology, Husserl's branch of philosophy, which studies the way things appear—that is to say, phenomena—in the belief that appearances truly disclose to us the way things really are; intuition (seen not as a subjective thing but as a form of genuine insight) can lead us to the truth about the world. Sokolowski is convinced that "since the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, appearances have been badly misunderstood. Appearances have been turned into mere ideas, into subjective impacts that at best hint at what things in themselves really are and at worst prevent us from ever reaching things at all...." There is something urgent in his desire to present the importance of what is manifested, what is disclosed, by Christianity. What has happened to our way of understanding the world since the Enlightenment removes us from the possibility of understanding what the Bible and the Fathers tried to tell us in a symbolic language that was, for the Fathers, living and vital. "For modernity," Sokolowski says, "not only the symbolic but even the perceived needs to be restored; it is not only symbolism that is deprived of any real presence, but perception as well." He argues that a phenomenological approach can cut through many of the problems confronting modern theology, which tends either to retreat to medieval or patristic thought, or to ally itself with one or another strain in modern philosophy. Husserl's phenomenology, illuminated by the thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar, can look at how things are manifested and what this means in a way that allows us to avoid the traps laid by Cartesian and Kantian thought.

Although it is more conservative in many ways, *Eucharistic Presence* reminds me of another important book, Fergus Kerr's *Theology after Wittgenstein*. Both address the ways in which theology must challenge the post-Enlightenment understanding of perception and embodiment and manifestation; both use some of the most interesting strains of modern philosophy as a challenge to common philosophical assumptions, without being co-opted by the secular assumptions of modernity, and in this they are very like the Fathers, who used the intellectual language of the age to transform permanently such concepts as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"person," "nature," "substance," and "will."

I have some problems with the book, as any Orthodox would—Sokolowski accepts a more uncritical stance toward Western Trinitarian theology than even some Catholic theologians would, and the references to the Eucharist as a "re-enactment" of Calvary cause problems not only for the Orthodox—but these differences with details are not as important as the overall direction of this book. Sokolowski's reflections on the Eucharist are rich and helpful; his arguments in favor of a phenomenological approach to Christian theology, liturgy, and the Bible are intriguing; and his argument that phenomenology offers a way through post-Enlightenment philosophical dilemmas is convincing.

My major criticism is that Sokolowski spends more time arguing for his theology of disclosure than he does using it, because when he applies his approach to liturgy or to the meaning of Scripture or to non-Christian religion, the results are often very fruitful. For example, he shows that what the priest says and does during the liturgy

> are not to be taken as a theatrical depiction of what Christ said and did at the Last Supper, but as a quotation of the words and actions of Christ. The difference between picturing and quoting is a phenomenological difference, a difference in appearance or in the manner of presentation....It is not the case that the difference between picturing and quoting is only a matter of the intention of the celebrant or the participants. No matter what the celebrant intends, and no matter of whether he is aware of it or not, he is quoting and not depicting when he pronounces the words of consecration and performs the gestures. The difference between quoting and depicting is not a mere psychological distinction, not something that arises "in the mind alone." It is not subject to our arbitrary will. Even if the celebrant were to become as overtly dramatic as an actor on a stage, he would still be quoting and not depicting; his behavior would simply be at odds with what he is doing.

The difference between depicting—that is, representing the Last Supper in a theatrical manner—and quoting is that the quotation of Jesus' words—"This is my body....This is my blood....Take this, all of you...."—draws us into this single time, from every age and from every part of the world. A depiction may aim at moving us, or reminding us; but quotation moves us into a place in which what is intended by the performer—always a concern in depiction—is made irrelevant. It is what Jesus did and does that is presented by quotation, and that is in some sense obscured or limited by depiction.

Liturgical innovators, take note. In speaking of the Eucharist, Sokolowski writes,

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SUMMER 1995

REVIEWER

JOHN GARVEY, *a regular* Commonweal *columnist, is a priest of the Orthodox Church in America. His parish, Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church of the Albanian Archdiocese, is in Queens, New York.*

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the shedding of the blood of Christ is replaced by the offering and consumption of the bread and wine. To the bodily eye, the bread and wine are mere tokens; what material value do they have in comparison with the fatted calf or the first fruits of a harvest? All the more, in their triviality, do they call forth the obedience of those who participate in the sacrifice, the dedication of their lives in union with the dedication of Christ. If the offering were more spectacular, we could offer less of ourselves.

There are problems with the book—for example, the idea that the sacrifice of Calvary occurs "again" sacramentally—but where Sokolowski is most helpful is in his argument that the use of Husserl's phenomenology "makes it possible for us to think of the mind as public," to see "that the mind is 'outside' from the start and that the world itself presents itself to man." Phenomenology "will gradually help us realize that the 'problem of the real world' or 'the egocentric predicament' is not a problem or a predicament at all, only a difficulty we have talked ourselves into having. The 'problem' is not solved but dissolved."

This is an advantage of Wittgenstein's approach as well. Both Husserl and Wittgenstein can help us to cut through the individualism which has been part of philosophy at least since Descartes (and some Orthodox would argue that the way was paved for Descartes by the scholastics). This theological use of contemporary philosophy is closer to the spirit of the Fathers than is a retreat to classical patristic language; the belief that the Fathers can simply be rephrased in contemporary terms misses the boldness of what they were about. By appropriating the contemporary language of philosophy (Platonism and neo-Platonism, for the most part), they made it clear in their time that it was, at the very least, not unreasonable to be a Christian; and in the process they transformed such concepts as "the person" in such a way that even non-Christian philosophy was later forced to absorb the new meanings.

Sokolowski's critique of modernity is brief but convincing, and his use of Husserl and von Balthasar is not only helpful but frequently moving, and very much in the spirit of the Fathers. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 2)

his thesis, Raymo adds, "When machine intelligence becomes functionally indistinguishable from human intelligence, will we concede that machines are conscious? That machines have souls?"

Why not structure a "truth" on the opposing premise? Let us posit that there is indeed an element of our being that will persist when our physical body turns to dust. Now let us collect information coherent with this premise, and we too arrive at a "truth." If we are not happy with the level of coherence we have achieved, we can re-examine premise or observation.

And which takes precedence, premise or experience? Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, is quoted saying, "I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand." This is not solely a theological perspective. Albert Einstein expressed the view that, in science, "imagination is more important than knowledge." Theologian and scientist appear to agree on the primacy of premise—the intuitive component of "truth."

One can, of course, start by rejecting Raymo's idea that human intelligence can ever be attained by a machine. But, more significantly, the increase in machine intelligence will not be brought about by an initiative internal to the machine. The increase will come about by actions of an external agent utilizing imagination, will, and purpose. These are properties clearly not possessed by the machine. Without them, a smart machine plugged into a power source and left to its own would, I suspect, soon bore itself to death.

But most people are not bored. Something within us compels us to imagine, to gather, to create. With an indwelling instigator of growth, we do not fit the category of magnificent machines. Our indwelling spirit impels us to grow in awareness of the vast universe residing outside the "magnificent machine" we inhabit. In an essay accompanying Raymo's, John Honner, S.J., agrees with Abner Shimony, professor of philosophy and physics at Boston University, who speaks of the discovery of an "objective

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indefiniteness," which Honner describes as "a presence that is real and yet not completely traceable; a presence that is part of our experience, and yet eludes captivity; a term that matches our traditional understanding of spirit."

The premise, or intuition, that we possess an indwelling spirit is more perceptive than the one chosen by Raymo. It allows us to consider seriously what otherwise become incomprehensible "data" handed down to us about Christ and his Apostles. It calls us, over a lifetime, to test our grasp of Christ's guideline to personal and corporate well-being. With the premise of an indwelling soul, we can fruitfully explore the personal and social significance of trying earnestly to "love our Creator with our whole being, and our neighbor as ourselves." An "objective indefiniteness" allows us to ponder a purpose in life. I find that preferable to pondering the purpose of a magnificent, but lifeless, machine. ANGELO S. MICELI

The writer is the retired director of research and development for Uniroyal International.

Bellarmine's blindness

Charlotte, N.C.

To the Editors: In his reply to Chet Raymo, John Honner, S.J., says that Cardinal Bellarmine "grasped the hypothetical nature of Galileo's work more clearly than did Galileo." The evidence regarding Bellarmine's thought, found in Maurice A. Finocchiaro, *The Galileo Affair, A Documentary History* [University of California Press, 1989], tells a somewhat different story.

In a 1615 letter to Paolo Foscarini, a Camaldolese theologian who supported Galileo, Bellarmine indicates what he means by hypothesis: "I say that it seems to me that [you] and Mr. Galileo are proceeding prudently by limiting yourselves to speaking suppositionally ["*ex suppositione*"—often translated "hypothetically"] and not absolutely, as I have always believed that Copernicus spoke. For there is no danger in saying that, by assuming the earth moves and the sun stands still, one saves all the appearances better than by postulating eccentrics and epicyles, and that is sufficient for the mathematician. However, it is different to want to affirm that in reality the sun is at the center of the world and only turns on itself without moving from east to west, and the earth is in the third heaven and revolves with great speed around the sun; this is a very dangerous thing, likely not only to irritate all scholastic philosophers and theologians, but also to harm the holy faith by rendering Holy Scripture false." Whereas Honner, in using the phrase "hypothetical nature," may have meant "unproven nature," it is clear that, in Bellarmine's usage, *ex suppositione* means used as an aid for calculation—a mathematical model which will not be subject to proof because it does not claim to represent reality.

In the same letter Bellarmine writes that he will not believe the earth circles the sun unless the truth of that theory is fully demonstrated, and continues: "I add that the one who wrote, 'The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he rose,' was Solomon, who not only spoke inspired by God, but was a man above all others wise and learned in the human sciences and in the knowledge of created things.... Now, suppose you say that Solomon speaks in accord with appearances, since it seems to us that the sun moves [though in fact it is the earth that moves], just as to someone who moves away from the seashore on a ship it looks as though the shore is moving. I shall answer that when someone moves away from the shore, although it appears to him that the shore is moving away from him, nevertheless he knows that this is an error and corrects it, seeing clearly that the ship moves and not the shore; but in regard to the sun and the earth, no scientist has any need to correct the error, since he clearly experiences that the earth stands still and that the eye is not in error when it judges the sun moves, as it also is not in error when it judges that the moon and the stars move." Thus, Bellarmine's proof that the sun moves and the earth does not is a trust, unwarranted in Galileo's view, that the senses would detect motion if the earth moved.

And what of Galileo? In his essay, "Considerations on the Copernican Opinion" [1615], he shows that he fully understands the need to demonstrate the truth

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of a hypothesis before accepting it. "Not to believe that there is a demonstration of the earth's mobility until it is shown is very prudent, nor do we ask that anyone believe such a thing without a demonstration." To show, on the one hand, that by postulating a moving earth and a stable sun, one can explain the data gained by observation and calculation, is not the same as demonstrating "that these hypotheses are really true in nature." It is equally true, however, "that one cannot account for such appearances [the data] with the other commonly accepted system," the view that the sun circles the earth. "The latter is undoubtedly false, while it is clear that the former...may be true. Nor can one or should one seek any greater truth in a position than that it corresponds with all particular appearances."

Regarding the perception of motion, Galileo wrote: "[N]either Copernicus nor his followers will ever use this phenomenon of the shore and the boat to prove that the earth is in motion and the sun at rest....For if this were one of Copernicus's demonstrations, or if his

"I suppose it gets pretty damn lonely up there at the top!"

others did not argue more effectively, I really think that no one would agree with him." Galileo rightly regards dependence on direct observation of the earth's motion as misleading, and bases his preference for the geokinetic theory on more subtle reasons, such as the simplicity and coherence of the theory's explanation of observed astronomical phenomena.

If Bellarmine grasped the hypothetical nature of Galileo's work more clearly than did Galileo, and if he understood the importance of continued discussion to understanding and proving an hypothesis, and nevertheless forbade discussion of the hypothesis, then he is clearly suspect of suppressing discussion to avoid "harm to the holy faith by rendering Holy Scripture false." I have offered a less judgmental view that is accepted by many scholars: Bellarmine's understanding of hypothesis and proof was inferior to Galileo's.

Bellarmine certainly suffered from the inability to make the intellectual paradigm shift needed to understand the geokinetic theory and the limits on the literal interpretation of Scripture. Indeed, 200 years later, on August 16, 1820, the Congregation of the Holy Office decreed that a Catholic astronomer could treat the earth's motion as fact. Institutional and individual paradigm blindness is a fact of life which is ignored at one's own risk. HUGH FALLON

The writer, formerly a senior programmer with IBM, teaches computer science at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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A day off, with twins

BRIAN DOYLE

At four o'clock one recent morning, as I was walking laps around my house with my new twin sons Liam and Joseph on my shoulders, trying to induce the boys to belch, I noticed a car sliding backwards down our hill. Then I noticed that the hill was covered with snow. There was a great deal of snow. This is a rare event in our wet Oregon valley, and it would, I knew, shut down the town. As I watched the car slide slowly out of sight, I realized that (a) I could not get to work, (b) I could let my wife sleep, (c) I was on duty all day.

Out of a writer's itch to record, and the need to tell the world how very bizarre a day with newborn twins can be, I decided to keep a running account.

Five A.M.: Still can't get over snowfall. Shocking event. Snow falling silently in gobs the size of cats. Sight reminds me of James Joyce—doesn't Joyce end a story that way? Shuffle over the bookshelf, leaving Joseph on the couch, carting Liam under my arm. Ah, yes, "The Dead," in *Dubliners*: "...snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead." Great ending. Liam belches—another great ending. This means he can be rolled up in his blankets like a pink cigar and stashed in the bassinet. I head for a couch to nap. Joe begins to cry. The prospect of a nap falls away faintly, faintly falling.

Six A.M.: Joe still crying. He began with a whimper and built up to an operatic series of screams and wails. I put a Puccini tape on very softly; Joe likes opera and is sometimes settled by it. He simply picks up his pace and drowns out Kiri Te Kanawa. Probably never been done before. I give up and get bottle ready. Liam sleeping like tree. Boy can sleep through anything. I envy him; it would be a great pleasure to have enormous hands come out of the sky and wrap me up in blankets and put me to sleep.

Eight A.M.: Liam sleeping like log, rock, mountain. Joe wide awake. Guzzled entire bottle in two minutes. Has not yet belched and is squirming uncomfortably. Have exhausted Puccini, Verdi, Vivaldi; am moving into jazz. Joseph doesn't like jazz much. Tough. I like jazz.

Nine A.M.: Joe asleep, Liam awake, their sister Lily, age three, calling from upstairs: "Dad, I have to go to the bathroom." Construct wall of pillows around Joe on couch and then grab Liam like football and shuffle upstairs. On the way pass master bedroom, tell lovely exhausted wife that she's off duty, I'm home for day. "I love you when you're home," she says, and disappears back into blankets.

Ten A.M.: Both boys awake and yowling. Lily watching "Sesame Street," eating a banana and two cookies for breakfast. Lily loves it when dad makes breakfast. She is seated in tiny rocking chair, covered with blanket, clutching bear. Theme song comes on; Lily sings along. Appears to know some thirty characters and actors by name. Dad resolves to write love letter to Jim Henson. Good man—made my daughter happy. Remember that Henson is dead. Resolve to pray for him, poor man.

Noon: Lily eating banana and cookies for lunch. Wife in shower. Both boys asleep on dad, who is still in robe and slippers. Boys arranged in such a way that dad can with great difficulty open the sports section of the paper. Can only get to one page, though—the agate type, results of games, lineups. Good enough. Read with interest. Results sound familiar—check date and paper. Paper ten days old. Sigh. Nothing to be done; keep reading paper. Section mostly Oregon high school football results. Hey, Klamath Falls won! Wonder where exactly Klamath Falls is. Resolve to find out someday.

Two P.M.: Shower. Bliss. Wonder what genius invented shower. Resolve to find out someday. Stay in shower almost until...

Three P.M.: Wife feeds boys, who sprawl on the bed in milky stupor. Wife and daughter go out to play in snow, build snowman, etc. "Boys should be asleep for quite a while," says wife. Door closes with a click. Boys snap awake and stare at me.

Five P.M.: Joseph imitating airplane on takeoff; I put on *Don Giovanni*, he falls asleep like a stone. Brief prayer for soul of Mozart. Great guy died young. Had sons, I think. Wonder what he played for them? Resolve to find out someday. Mozart's sons remind me that Shakespeare had twins. Wonder when he found time to write.

Seven P.M.: Dinner—yesterday's chicken, two rubbery carrots, what appears to be a zucchini, three green beans. Steam everything in sight and then mix with pasta. Result presentable. Thank stars for pasta. Wonder briefly who invented pasta. Boys howling in bedroom; upon checking, discover wife changing one and juggling other. Pause in action for kiss; wife's face so lovely and tired that I open best bottle of wine in the house and put it by her plate. Lily busily eating banana and cookies for dinner.

Nine P.M.: Lily in bed, wife in bed, boys asleep for the moment; lock up house, turn out lights, adjust thermostat, stare out window. It has begun to rain, and the snow is slowly sliding down the hill. Realize that I will have to go to work tomorrow. Work never seemed easier; no one cries at work. Realize with surprise that I will miss the lovely funny chaos of day at home with wife and children. Realize that I love them with inarticulate, ferocious love. Filled with joy, briefly ponder staying up to read like a mature normal curious man of letters, get grip on reality, resolve to get into bed and snatch half hour of sleep, and...

9:02 P.M.: Do so. □

Brian Doyle is the editor of Portland Magazine *at the University of Portland, in Oregon.*

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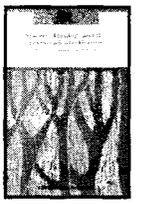

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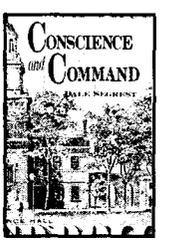

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